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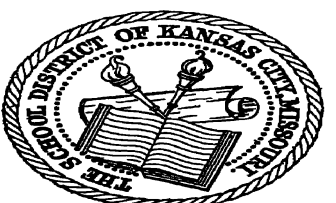

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Monograph Series No. 1

MANAGERS IN DISTRESS

by William G. B. Carson

THE THEATRE ON THE FRONTIER
Chicago, 1932

LETTERS OF MR. AND MRS. CHARLES KEAN
RELATING TO THEIR AMERICAN TOURS
St. Louis, 1945

ST. LOUIS GOES TO THE OPERA
1837-1941
St. Louis, 1946

DAYTON-FRA COMPANY

MANAGERS IN DISTRESS

The St. Louis Stage, 1840-1844

WILLIAM G. B. CARSON

St. Louis
St. Louis Historial Documents Foundation
1949

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CHRISTIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION, ST LOUIS

TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER

PREFACE

In this book I take up the pen where I laid it down something more than fifteen years ago. In *The Theatre on the Frontier* I then recorded the humble birth of the drama in St. Louis, and, having done so, followed the first steps of the youngster through its early years until, after a quarter of a century, its grip on life was sure. That work, as I have said, covers twenty-five years. This one is content to deal with only five. For this discrepancy there is more than one reason.

The years 1840-1844 constituted a definite period in the history of the St. Louis stage, as indeed in that of the American theatre *in toto*. During those five seasons—or, as they were computed in St. Louis, ten seasons—the fortunes of the stage and of those who lived on it and by it sank to their lowest depths. Business depression and political unrest proved to be powerful enemies, and, though the managers here and elsewhere resorted to every device they could think of to attract audiences, they were lucky if they succeeded in escaping complete disaster. By 1845, however, a gradual improvement had set in, and before very long the theatre was restored to its normal state of health, if indeed there can be said to be such a thing.

Then, too, I have attempted a different approach. It seems to me that it is worth while to observe, not alone what happened on our stage approximately a century ago, but also how it happened, and why it happened in the ways it did. Closer scrutiny, I believe, brings out facts about the manner of the operation of the theatre in St. Louis which a more superficial review would inevitably miss. Moreover, these facts are in my opinion significant because the St. Louis theatre was no unique phenomenon, but, on the contrary, a more or less representative institution, and from the details of the one we may learn much of the details of the many.

There is also a further reason. In his cogent introduction to *The American Theatre as seen by its Critics, 1752-1934,* which he edited in conjunction with the late Montrose Moses, John Mason Brown makes some very telling points about stage history as it is usually written. It is, he says, "unquestionably a chronicle of the stage, but

the theatre which gains admission to [the writer's] pages is seldom, if ever, the same theatre which playgoers know, and which succeeds or fails according to the personal responses it awakens in them. It has lost its flesh and blood, its colors and its shadows, its hazards and its expectancy, its first-run meaning, and the men and women on both sides of the footlights who give it its point and its appeal." It was to recapture some of this lost savor that the two collaborators published, though one did not live to see the task completed, a valuable assortment of critiques and reviews written on the spot. It is in part to achieve something like this for the St. Louis stage of the early 1840's that the following pages have been written. My intention is in no way to belittle the contributions of those who have used the other approach. That is, of course, invaluable; it would be impossible to present all the history in "slow motion," and, if this were done, no one would have time to read the results.

In the introduction quoted above Mr. Brown points his finger at the sometimes forgotten truth that the theatre is the creation of "men and women on both sides of the footlights." Not always do they receive their due. They have, as a rule, been dead a long time. We do not see them as living persons; nor do we see their theatres through their eyes while the outcome is still in the balance. When we meet them, their problems have long since been solved. Gone are their anxieties, gone their disappointments and their triumphs. So much is lost. In this book I try to satisfy Mr. Brown. With not only contemporary newspapers but a wealth of letters, diaries, account books, and other records to draw on, I have sought to revivify the St. Louis theatre from 1840 through 1844, to see it, hear it, and feel it as it was seen, heard, and felt by those who lived with it in the Fabulous Forties.

The focal point of all its activities was two men, Noah M. Ludlow and Solomon S. Smith, the managers of the resident company, and the arbiters of its destiny. These two men I have tried to bring back to the land of the living. I have tried to show what manner of men they were, to see their world through their eyes, and so both to compound a history and also to arouse interest in them themselves and sympathy with them in their perplexities.

In my labors I have received help from many persons, and to at least some of them I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness and to

express my gratitude. By far the greater part of the material I have used—that is, the diaries, almost all the letters, and most of the newspapers—are in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, and to the members of its staff, Mr. Charles van Ravenswaay, Miss Marjory Douglas, Mrs. Brenda R. Gieseker, and Miss Caroline Crutcher, I owe more than I can say. Dr. William Van Lennep, Curator of the Theatre Collection of the Harvard College Library, kindly placed at my disposal all pertinent manuscripts and pictures in his archives. Mr. Frederick Voelker has aided me in my efforts to solve the financial riddles between the pages of the Ludlow and Smith Return Books. To Dr. George C. D. Odell, Mr. George Freedley, Mrs. Elizabeth P. Barrett, Mr. Barrett Clark, Dr. Walter Prichard Eaton, Dr. Robert Terry, and many others I am indebted for valuable counsel and useful information. Finally, as always, my work has been made possible by the co-operation and encouragement of my wife.

WILLIAM G. B. CARSON

St. Louis
December 8, 1948.

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I

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Spring of 1840

Near the foot of Olive Street on the St. Louis levee is tied up twelve months of the year the S.S. *Goldenrod,* J. W. Menke, Captain. Here nightly gather fun-loving citizens to hear actors of the 1940's tear all manner of passions to tatters in good, red-corpuscled drāmas like *The Drunkard* and *Nellie, the Sewing Machine Girl.* Few of these modern playgoers know, and fewer still would care if they did, that on their way to the gangplank which leads to their aquatic theatre they have crossed historic soil and elbowed their way through crowds of histrionic ghosts.

Within a few yards of the moorage stood long ago the Thespian Theatre, where in 1819 "young gentlemen of the town" spouted bombastic speeches and "the celebrated Mrs. Groshon" declaimed the lusty lines of Pecanne, the rough and ready heroine of Alphonso Wetmore's *The Pedlar,* the first home-brewed play staged west of the Mississippi.[1] A little further up the slope is the site of the old Salt House, where from 1826 to 1836 audiences and actors alike sweltered in the almost ventilation-proof "hot house" which succeeded the hall on Main Street as the local Temple of the Muses. For fourteen years after that up the same hillside toiled such dramatic luminaries as Edwin Forrest, William Charles Macready, and the irresistible Ellen Tree, all heading for the famous New St. Louis Theatre, the drab-faced structure which during those seasons was the theatrical capitol of the West.

Visit the spot to-day. "Change still doth reign, and keep the greater sway." Where a century ago the stars shone in all their glory, to-day, shining in their red and white paint, Public Service Company busses take their siestas between the rush hours of morning and evening. On the southeast corner of Third and Olive

[1]Mrs. Groshon's "celebrity" was really very slight indeed. First known as "Mrs. Goldson," she was seen in New York as early as 1813 (George C. D. Odell: *Annals of the New York Stage,* II, 413). In 1820 she came to St. Louis with the Collins and Jones troupe, and while here joined the local amateurs in a performance of *The Pedlar* by Alphonso Wetmore, a paymaster in the Army of the United States (William G. B. Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier,* 73).

Streets a battered gray sign in the shape of a shield informs the passerby that here once stood the famous theatre operated by Ludlow and Smith. Beyond this dejected-looking emblem, the eye encounters from the imposing span of the Eads Bridge on the north to the slender spire of the Old Cathedral on the south only waste-land, empty, broken streets bisecting acre upon acre of weed-grown vacancy. To the east the sky is smudged with the smoke of the mills and factories on the Illinois side of the great brown river. The whole region is in a state of suspended animation, passing through a dreary entr'acte between the glories of its past and, it is hoped, the greater glories of its future.

On the evening of July 3, 1837, when the New St. Louis Theatre was formally dedicated with an appropriate address in heroic couplets and Tobin's posthumous comedy of *The Honey Moon,* the drama in St. Louis had already attained its majority. As far back as 1815 ambitious amateurs—all gentlemen, of course; no lady would have been so indelicate as to appear upon a public stage—had begun giving plays in the first theatre west of the Great River, nothing, in fact, more pretentious than a large log hut erected originally as a blacksmith shop, but later pressed into service as a courthouse, ballroom, church, and—God save the mark!—theatre.[2] It had stood on the west side of Barn Street (later Third) near Spruce and opened its doors with a double bill composed of *The School for Authors* and *The Budget of Blunders.* Four years later the ambitious Thespians had erected their house on the lot bounded on the east by Main, and extending from Locust to Olive. From that modest structure, almost certainly the first in the West built expressly for a theatre, the transition to the abandoned salt warehouse on Church Street (later Second) about a hundred feet north of Olive, had been made in 1826. Eleven seasons later that histrionic oven, succumbing to its own accumulated heat, had gone up in flames, to be replaced the following summer by the more appropriate edifice on Third and Olive. Here for fourteen years Noah M. Ludlow and Solomon S. Smith presided over the theatrical destinies of the growing city. In 1851 the firm having concluded its

[2]Plays had, of course, been given in the Spanish colonies to the west as early as 1598. Cf. Winifred Johnston: "The Early Theatres in the Spanish Borderlands," *Mid-America,* Vol. XIII; N.S., Vol. II, No. 2.

activities in St. Louis as the first step toward final dissolution, the building, callously condemned as a public menace, was torn down to make way for the new Custom House, which was to stand its ground until in turn demolished when the National Park Service took over the whole area to erect upon it a fitting memorial to Thomas Jefferson and the pioneers who funnelled through St. Louis to people the little known, but alluring, wilderness as far as the Rockies—and beyond.

The story of these early days, the first twenty-five years of the St. Louis stage, has been told elsewhere, and will not be repeated here.[8] The purpose of the writer in preparing this volume is to pick up the thread of the narrative where he dropped it and follow the same stage through another five seasons of troubled existence.

The St. Louis of 1840 was a very different place from the lonely frontier town of 1815 with its approximately two thousand Americans, Frenchmen, and Indians. "Its population," asserts the *St. Louis Directory for the Years 1840-1*, "within the corporate limits (which are very confined), is 16,291. The suburbs, which are in fact a part of the city, have a population of 6,349, making a total of 22,640, and an increase in ten years of 16,338, or more than 250 per cent." The editor, Charles Keemle, goes on to point out that in a single year the number of steamboats arriving at the levee had increased from 1,476 to 1,721, and the tonnage from 213,193 to 244,185. "The increase has taken place in spite of the unfortunate state of moneyed affairs over the whole country." Furthermore, Keemle points out, St. Louis is becoming increasingly a centre of commerce.

By this fifth decade of the century the pioneering French had been overwhelmed by the great flood of Americans from the Eastern states, and there was now setting in the great influx of Germans fleeing from tyranny overseas and bringing to the city their thrift and their love of music and drama. Gradually, as more and more of them came and identified themselves with the life of the community, they exercised a progressively stronger influence, but in the years under consideration here their grip was not yet secure and their weight was little felt. So far as the theatre was concerned it was as yet but negligible.

[8]Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier.*

Though remote from the populous regions of the East and South, St. Louis was by no means the home of a crude, uncultured peasantry. This misconception has been finally removed by Professor John McDermott in his *Private Libraries in Creole St. Louis* in which he reveals the surprising richness of the settlers' libraries under the flags of France and Spain. Already, in 1840, there were, in addition to two "capacious and substantial schoolhouses in which between two and three hundred scholars are taught by respectable and efficient teachers"—again I quote the *Directory*—two institutions of higher learning, St. Louis University, operated by the Jesuits, and the Episcopal Kemper College with its newly established medical school. The Catholics, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians had opened two churches each, and the Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians, Associated Reformed Presbyterians, and German Lutherans one apiece. (There were also two "African" congregations.)

Something of the character of the town, its merits and demerits, appears in a letter from Ludlow to his son-in-law, Matthew C. Field, then an editorial writer on the New Orleans *Picayune,* written June 23, 1841.

I wish you would stir up the *Orleanese* with a long pole—and send them up here—We want some of their spirit in this community—mighty good people here *"bless* you"—but they lack ginger —Tell them—and it is a fact that there is the [*sic*] one of the *very* best Hotels here in the U.S. [the new Planters House] . . . .

Then the country around us—you know is beautiful—*pleasant* drives—*fine horses* and carriages at a very reasonable rate—*fishing* in abundance in the Ponds and Lakes around us—and over in Illinois—Fine shooting in the season for game—Markets and Hotels well furnished—mineral springs in the vicinity—and every thing calculated to contribute to the comfort of ladies and gentlemen who—*have money*—even a well regulated Theatre—conducted by the gentlemanly managers.[4]

Ludlow wanted Mat to speed some of his fellow-citizens up the river. He knew they liked to go to the theatre.

Returning now to the building on Third and Olive, which, though, as we shall see, not the only purveyor of theatrical entertainment in

[4]All letters and diaries quoted, except in those cases specifically noted, are in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis.

the city, was by all odds the most potent, we find that it had now rounded out three years of its all-too-brief career, and was the accepted centre of dramatic life. Ludlow's familiar description in his book[5] is supplemented by an even more interesting, if less well spelled account in the diary of Henry B. Miller, a St. Louis artisan, which I shall insert.

. . . . the Theatre is sitio at the corner of 3d & Olive street this is quite a respectable theatre the building is about 150 feet by 80; with two tiers of boxes & gallery the Pit or Parquette as it is here called, is fitted up in better stile than we mostly see in the Eastern cities; there the pit is generally half price, and benches for seats in consequence of which it is very much crowded and that too with the lower Classes quarrels & fights are common—but here; the seats of the Parquette are chairs, every one has his chair there can be no crowding, the price of admission to the Parquette is the same as to the boxes the consequence is the Parquette is filled (when full) with men of respectability, taste & learning, the pit is the best place in the theatre, if you can get a conveniet seat, and men mostly when they wish to see or criticize on a perform take the pit in preference; they can hear more distinctly; and see plainer than in any other part of the house being nearer the performers, and right in front of the stage;—the Gallery is but half price; this part of the house is generally intended for the hard customers Darkies, &, &, this house will hold for 12 to 1500 persons without much inconvenience; the interior of the house presents quite a neat appearance, the principal ceiling is canvassed, with paintings of the muses in the front part of the house on the 3d story (over the offices) is the Gentlemans Saloon this is a very fine room it extends the whole width of the building, by almost 21 feet wide & I think 27 feet high to the square there are two sky lights in the ceiling the ceiling is Stuccoed and tolerable well done, and makes a good appearance the exterior of the building makes a rather poor show not being yet finished; it is intended to be plastered and a splendid Portico to be erected in front; if this is ever done, the house will make a splendid appearance tho hard times in money matters, had quite a visible effect on the finishing of the exterior of the house, it has already cost upwards of $60,000 the estimated cost of the house finished complete was estimated at $80,000, the Lessees Mes Ludlow & Smith have pledged themselves to pay the company ten per cent on the money expended, for the next ten years, when their Lese expires; they have had the house open upwards of one year, the Dramatic corps, has been passibly good the greater part of the time . . . .

[5]Noah M. Ludlow. *Dramatic Life as I Found It*, 477-478.

This was written in 1838, when, as it says, the building was only about a year old, but the projected face-lifting was never carried out.

That, despite the pleasing pictures painted by Ludlow and Miller, the Theatre building left something to be desired may be deduced from the fact that, after the property had been acquired by the Department of the Treasury as the site of a projected Custom House, the structure, which was not yet fifteen years of age, had to be demolished at once. On January 20, 1852, a surveyor by the name of W. W. Greene wrote Secretary Thomas Corwin that the City Engineer had condemned the east wall "as unsafe and liable to fall and dangerous." There seems to have been a hope that some portions of the old building could be employed in the new one, but on February 16 the architect, George I. Barnett, wrote Secretary Corwin: "On examination of the Old Theatre Building, I find that the windows, doors, stairs, benches, the columns of the Vestibule and Mocenium [almost certainly *proscenium* is meant], the iron columns that support the boxes and other materials will not be available for the purposes of rebuilding in the New Custom House." Furthermore, on March 12 he reported the bricks too were useless, "being for the most part Salmon and the balence light red brick—and of a very inferior quality."

So, while it was not without other virtues, the Theatre, we see, was structurally no model.

To the credit of the managers it should be added that the theatre was recognized as a respectable establishment into the confines of which a gentleman need not fear to escort his "lady" lest she be exposed to insult or embarrassment. It should be understood that a century ago audiences nowhere practiced the decorum accepted today as a matter of course. Perhaps partly because it was not yet possible to extinguish the house-lights during a performance and the occupants of boxes and pit were quite as visible to the naked eye as were the actors on the stage, many of these spectators saw no reason for hiding their respective lights under any bushels. It never occurred to them that they should be seen and not heard. They came to have their fun and not infrequently considered themselves in a sense parts of the show. It would be asking too much of a theatre on the fringes of civilization to observe Emily Postian courtesies not yet in vogue

in the great metropolitan centres. Yet, even so, Ludlow and Smith by dint of resolution and firmness had succeeded in making their house one of the utmost respectability, even if not always a haven of peace and quiet. "On the opening of the house," wrote Ludlow in his *Dramatic Life as I Found It*, "I made a beginning of a reform which I adhered to and carried forward in after years in all the theatres under my management. This was to refuse admittance to any female to the performance who did not come attended by a gentleman, or someone having the appearance of a man of respectability, not even in the third tier; and women notoriously of the *pave* were never, under any conditions, admitted. The result of these rigid measures was that the third tier in our theatres was as quiet and orderly as any portion of the house."[6] The success of the two managers in their efforts to preserve an atmosphere of decency and decorum is doubtless one of the bases for the respect almost universally accorded them in the community.

Since these two men are in a way the heroes of our tale, it might be well to acquaint ourselves with them and their respective dispositions. They had in 1840 been partners for five years, operating in St. Louis in the spring, summer, and fall (since 1837), and in Mobile during the winter. Later in the same year they were to accept the challenge of the redoubtable James H. Caldwell, and invade New Orleans as well; in this latter struggle they had, before many months had passed, won a lasting victory.[7] For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, partners they were destined to remain for another thirteen years.

They had much in common and on many points were in full agreement. Both were actors, Ludlow being identified chiefly with high comedy, Smith with eccentric roles. Of the two, perhaps in part because he travelled more widely, Smith was the better known

[6] P. 478.

[7] James H. Caldwell (1793-1863) was an English actor who came to this country early in the century and after some years in Virginia, where he entered the field of management, transferred his activities to New Orleans, where he soon established himself as the dominant force in the theatre. He built and managed the Camp Street and the handsome St. Charles Theatres, and maintained his grip until 1843 when displaced by Ludlow and Smith. An account of this struggle may be found in the memoirs of either of the latter men. Caldwell also had many interests outside the theatre, and is especially remembered for his introduction of lighting gas into the city.

outside their own bailiwicks. What is more important, both men had for their profession a sincere love and a profound respect. In the theatre they saw, not merely a means of livelihood nor even just a great art, but also a potent instrument for the public good, a powerful teacher of morality and virtue. It was their fixed determination that never should the establishments under their control in any way bring discredit to that profession. Hence they did not stop with the promulgation and enforcement of the rules mentioned above, but they saw to it that the plays they presented were, even by nineteenth century standards, eminently proper; and they, furthermore, did their utmost to make the members of their companies conform to a reputable pattern of behavior. That they did not invariably succeed in this latter endeavor was not their fault, for they were not always in a position to do as they wished. Whenever the stage was subjected to attack on the part of narrow-minded clergymen—or anyone else—they came vigorously to its defence.[8] Finally, both men were in their private characters sober and industrious, and their names were never associated with any scandal. There can be little question that in those days when the "unco guid" were more than ready to discover and denounce any slips on the part of those who made their livelihoods on or by the stage, the conduct of these two men was a great asset to their profession.

Nothing in the record of their professional careers is more to their credit than their dealings with their actors. They treated them with fairness and respect, but demanded that in return they be used after the same manner. In the history of the American theatre is repeated over and over again with all manner of variations the story of the absconding manager and of unpaid actors and actresses. But in these tales the names of Ludlow and Smith, so far as I have seen, never appear. Says Mrs. John Drew in her *Autobiographical Sketch*, "After this I went to New Orleans, to Ludlow & Smith, proverbially the closest pair in the profession."[9] Perhaps they were close; if so, the following pages may show the reason why. But there is another side to the picture. Among Smith's cronies was one Edwin

[8]For Smith's reply to an attack by the Reverend Artemus Bullard, minister of the First Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, see his *Theatrical Management in the West and South for Thirty Years*, 158-159.

[9]P. 98.

Woolf, who had at one time led the orchestra in the theatres of his firm. The two carried on a correspondence, and a number of the musician's entertaining and enlightening letters have fortunately been preserved. In one, dated from Philadelphia, July 11, 1841, he has this to say: "There are but few managers who pay salaries regulary [*sic*]; and those salaries are mostly on a reduced scale." Never in all my examination of documents relating to the firm of Ludlow and Smith have I found in any form any assertion that it ever failed ultimately at least to meet its obligations to those who worked for it, even though so doing meant a personal loss.[10] Salaries might be at times in arrears. Often it was necessary to give notes in their stead, but I know of no instance in which the employee came out the loser in the end. This is, I think sufficient answer to Mrs. Drew.

Unfortunately it is not possible to stop at this point in my discussion of the two managers. They themselves have forced the issue. In his famous autobiography Joseph Jefferson says: "It is seldom that partners in theatrical management agree. Wood and Warren, of Philadelphia, were never on very friendly terms. Ludlow and Smith were in partnership for many years without exchanging a word except on business. How they managed it, or rather mismanaged it, I can't tell."[11] Jefferson is guilty of some exaggeration. It is true that the two men neither liked nor trusted each other. Their partnership was born in misunderstanding and concluded in ill-concealed dislike. But it is inaccurate to say that they spoke only on matters of business. In the main, despite smouldering resentments punctuated by occasional angry outbursts, they did for more than eighteen years, in fact for over a quarter of a century, preserve the amenities outwardly. They wrote each other in a friendly vein, visited each others' houses on occasion, and looked after each others' personal affairs. It was not until the Civil War that there was an open quarrel.

From time to time it will be necessary to mention this bad feeling. No history of the St. Louis stage during the period of their ascendancy can properly ignore it. In compiling their memoirs both parties saw to that, Ludlow especially adverting to it on page after page of his book. But it was Smith who first brought it into the open. In

[10]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 151.

[11]*Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson*, 115.

his *Theatrical Management* he says that, believing himself to have been treated unfairly after the dissolution of their partnership by "the person with whom I joined my fortunes," he would not mention the latter's name in his book.[12] This rather astonishing, and it would seem unnecessary, feat he somehow managed to accomplish, not, so far at least as I can see, gaining anything thereby. These memoirs were published in 1868. On February 14 of the following year he died suddenly after a paralytic stroke. Ludlow, whose hatred had by this time grown rancorous, set out to get revenge in his own recollections, which appeared eleven years later. These he filled with innuendoes and outright accusations of dishonesty. Because of his advanced age and the length of time which had intervened since the occurrence of the events he reported, he did not, scrutiny reveals, make out a very good case for himself. Nevertheless, there have been those who have accepted his words at their face value, and in this way he has partly accomplished what he set out to do when he attacked the character of a dead man who could not answer back.[13]

In considering Ludlow, I believe that perhaps the first thing to be noted is that we are dealing with a very unhappy man. This fact is revealed on page after page of his diaries now in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society. Furthermore, in an affidavit made in 1868 in connection with his quarrel with his former partner, he says that he was "naturally despondent" in his temperament.[14] There were in his life many circumstances to cause him genuine distress. His trials and misfortunes, plus perhaps some ill health, did, however, apparently breed in him a rather extreme case of self-pity revealed in his diaries and sometimes in his correspondence. As so often follows in such cases, he felt himself aggrieved when those with whom he came in contact failed to place his interests first, and he seems also to have assumed that his troubles automatically justified certain omissions.

[12]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 116.

[13]The Ludlow and Smith quarrel has been treated by Mr. Wayne W. Arnold in "Sol Smith: Chapters for a Biography" written as a master's thesis at Washington University in 1939. Since then additional data have been uncovered, and are now to be found in the archives of the Missouri Historical Society, and in part in the Theatre Collection of the Harvard College Library.

[14]Harvard College Library.

Except in the pursuit of his profession, he appears to have been exceedingly careless. This fact is evidenced by the sometimes almost incredible errors in his published recollections, errors which cannot, I think, justifiably be ascribed wholly to his advanced years. They are the more mystifying in that he kept diaries (much more consistently than did Smith despite many good resolutions) and, besides, must have had recourse to mountains of notes, without which, despite its inaccuracies, the book could not possibly have been compiled. Of less importance to-day, but of much greater seriousness during his lifetime, was his carelessness in money matters; or possibly it was inadequacy rather than carelessness. It is difficult for us today, surrounded as we are with financial processes and institutions which, if not always as secure as we could wish, have been so developed and systematized as to offer far more ready assistance to businessmen than was conceivable a century ago. It was then the practice to lean heavily on individual aid or at least on the backing of individuals who were willing to assume the risk of endorsing a note. Nor could one step at will into a nearby department store and charge whatever one wished to buy. Unless one happened to have been born with a flair for such affairs, the whole thing must have been, to say the least of it, bewildering. If one were engaged in a business or profession as hazardous as the theatrical, the confusion must have been almost stupefying. The years covered by this book were definitely lean ones. Ludlow and Smith did business in at least five states (Missouri, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Ohio), and in almost every one they contracted debts. Notes were constantly falling due and often could be met only by new borrowings. Personal property had to be mortgaged and sometimes sacrificed. And, as long as their theatres were open, salaries had to be paid once a week. Finally, the partners were, most of the time, miles apart, and one could not know at the moment what obligations the other was assuming or discharging.

For all this Smith seems to have had a gift. He was a clever and astute man of business, kept his head, and somehow or other managed to march forward. Despite many bitter complaints, I suspect that he derived a certain pleasure from the fracas. But poor Ludlow seems to have been blessed with no such knack. Moreover, he was usually almost wholly occupied with the complexities of a theatre in

operation and the necessity of mounting a new bill of plays every evening of the week, Sundays alone excepted. From 1840 to 1845 Smith spent little time in St. Louis. While the company was in Mobile, New Orleans, or elsewhere, he was often at the helm, but during the summer months he was prone to range far and wide in the firm's interest or his own. Meanwhile the senior partner stood by on Third and Olive. Bedevilled on all sides and having little head for such matters anyway, he seems to have brushed aside all but the most immediate perplexities for future solution, and, so far as was possible, to have put them out of his mind. When debts caught up with him, he paid them, I believe, if he had the cash. If he did not have it, he apparently felt the whole matter should be dropped. Frequently he fell back on the excuse that his health was not good.

It was this weakness that caused the final break between the two men, which almost culminated in legal action in 1863 and was eventually settled out of court in 1866. Ludlow was heavily in debt to Smith and, although for some time he paid the interest when due, could not be induced to pay the principal. He contended that he was unable to do so, but that he was not telling the truth Smith was firmly convinced. He felt certain that in conveying his real estate to members of his family, Ludlow had deliberately sought to place himself in such a position that he could not make good. This determination the former ascribed in part to the latter's resentment at his taking the Union side in the War between the States, for Smith suspected his former partner (perhaps quite unjustly) of Confederate sympathies. Into the details of this dispute there is no occasion to delve here. As I have said before, they are mentioned only because it is impossible to ignore them, and also because, I am convinced, Smith has been done a very grave injustice.[15]

In my opinion the most serious counts against Ludlow are his careful omission from his book of any mention of the real cause of the break and what must have been his deliberate deletion of passages from certain pages in Smith's book which he quoted in order to discredit the writer. He used quotations to make points which would reflect upon the honor of the other man and at the same time suppressed other sentences in the same context which flatly gave the lie to his charges.[16] Whatever the true explanation may be, my own

[15]Cf footnote 13.

[16]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 116-120; and Mr. Arnold's thesis.

conviction is that by the time he wrote his *Dramatic Life* his hatred had become such an obsession that he was no longer capable of either restraint or prudence.

If Ludlow was something of an introvert, Smith was definitely an extrovert, a man of versatile talents, abounding energy, and tremendous vitality. Most of his life was consumed in one battle after another with outrageous fortune, but, unlike his partner, he seems to have taken them all in his stride, and, despite occasional grumblings and explosions, to have thrived and in the end to have come out on the top of the heap. Like Browning, he "Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better." Travelling far and wide, he accumulated friends throughout the Union, and, whereas the rather stiff-necked Ludlow was apt to freeze people until they came to know him, "Old Sol," as he was almost invariably called, warmed them with his expansive good nature and generosity. "I didn't fancy Mr. Ludlow at first," says Clara Fisher Maeder in her autobiography, "and wrote home that he looked to me as if he had swallowed a poker, he was so stiff and formal; but I learned to like him better."[17] This was perhaps typical. People did not care for Ludlow at first, not even his future son-in-law, Matthew C. Field, who said of him in a letter addressed to Smith on September 14, 1835, after leaving St. Louis, "I do not like Mr. Ludlow—cant cotton to him." Later, Mat changed his allegiance, and in his diary and letters we find really hostile references to his old friend, practically the only ones I have come across in all the letters I have read. "Wherever he went," says Wayne Arnold in his *Sol Smith: Chapters for a Biography,* "the charm and gayety of his personality delighted people. One friend wrote, 'If you have not lost all drollery I expect something from you to again set our table in a roar.'"[18] Many of his letters bear affectionate salutations, such as 'My dear Uncle Sol,' from P. T. Barnum, 'My dear King Solomon,' from Charles Kean, 'My dear old friend,' from Ellen Tree, and many headed by 'Dear Old Sol.' " This from a man named Wood:

There is but one Sol celestial, and although my range has not been very limited, I have found only one Sol terrestial, and earth will be a great sufferer by the waning of either.

[17] *Autobiography of Clara Fisher Maeder,* 29.

[18] Francis C. Wemyss to Sol Smith, March 27, 1854 (Arnold thesis, p. 70).

Never before having found a person who would afford me pecuniary assistance and refuse any consideration or security, this exalted opinion is forced upon me. . . .[19]

The most moving tribute to the "Sol terrestial" which has come to my attention was one written in February, 1862, by Mary Ann Farren, a lifelong friend and for years a leading member of his company.

. . . . *You* must not despond. I remember it was the remark of every one in happy years gone by, that you were always most cheerful when things looked gloomiest—You have been "So clear in your great office" through life, that you have a certain refuge in the mercy of our Almighty Father . . . for by the fruit is the tree known, & in every relation of life, as husband, father, friend, if ever frail human man fulfilled his duties, you have. Pray forgive me for writing this, but my heart is full & I must speak.

Of such stuff were the two men whom, locked in an unbreakable embrace, we find dominating the St. Louis theatrical scene in the year of Our Lord 1840. Although the partnership was but five years old, both wished ardently to break loose, but practical considerations made separation for the time being unwise, if not unthinkable.[20] Each pondered the question alone and they discussed it together, but until 1853 the outcome was always the same. So they struggled on together, opposing as best they could the misfortunes which were to beset them for five unhappy years, the whole period covered by this book, which will ring down its curtain just as the black days are drawing to a close. There are to be many actors on our stage, but the leads fall to these two, and it is for that reason that they have been accorded star billing and the advance publicity allowed them in this program.

* * *

The five years from the beginning of 1840 to the close of 1844 were perhaps the most grievous in the history of the American stage. The St. Louis managers had no monopoly on distress. The country over, the story was the same with all too few cheerful exceptions. When one reads the accounts of the disasters which overwhelmed the theatrical world, actors and managers alike, during that dismal

[19]John Wood to Sol Smith, May 5, 1856 (*Ibid.*, 70).
[20]Smith. *Theatrical Management*, 234.

period, one wonders how they succeeded in surviving at all. Yet survive they did. Theatre folk, as their annals show, combine a toughness of fibre and a resiliency that enable them to stand up under terrific punishment with an optimism which refuses to surrender before even the most depressing realities.

"The season we are now entering on," writes Professor Odell in his *Annals of the New York Stage,* "was one of the most depressing in the history of American theatricals. Mitchell's Olympic and the Chatham weathered the storm better than any other houses. The Franklin was practically out of commission, and the great houses, the Park, the Bowery, and the rebuilt National[21] went through periods of decline that must have been heart-breaking. It apparently took the public three years to discover, after the panic of 1837, that it could begin its economy by staying away from the theatre; the result will be seen in the chronicle on which we are now embarking."[22]

This was in the fall of 1840. Of the following spring Francis Courtney Wemyss, the well-known actor and manager, wrote in his *Theatrical Biography:* ". . . at this period the theatres in New York were all at their lowest ebb;—the property of Mr. Simpson[23] in the Park, advertised for sale, as under seizure for rent, by Messrs. Astor and Beekman;—the process in all probability intended as a protection, instead of an oppression to Mr. Simpson; the National burnt, and not likely to be re-built again; and the Bowery closed by an injunction for non-payment of license."[24] But not yet had the bottom been reached. Professor Odell calls the season of 1842-1843 probably "the worst theatrical season—financially—in the range of New York history." . . .[25]

But this was, for New York at least, the nadir. "We shall, then, find a slight upward tendency, beginning with September, 1843, though as usual affairs at the Park were gloomier than in other

[21]The National Theatre had burned down on September 23, 1839. It was rebuilt and re-opened on October 12, 1840. On May 29, 1841, it burned again.

[22]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 440.

[23]Edmund Simpson, joint manager with Stephen Price of the Park Theatre, 1818-1840; sole manager until 1848.

[24]P. 288.

[25]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 603.

houses."[26] The lower-priced houses like the Bowery and the Chatham fared better. Gradually, by slow degrees, conditions improved even though the Park, the "first theatre" of the city, fell into decay and in a few years gave up the ghost, and the once-proud Bowery saved itself only by becoming the home of melodrama and the jingoistic "Bowery Bhoys."

As for Philadelphia, the best words perhaps to describe conditions there are *confusion* and *chaos*. "The drama proceeded of course, sometimes reviving for a considerable time, and at others sinking into a state of the utmost prostration. Its best action, however, was flickering, irregular, uncertain, and not at all like the established routine of former days, nor had it that position of a settled element of social enjoyment which in earlier times it possessed." This from William B. Wood, the veteran actor-manager who had known the Quaker City stage for nearly half a century.[27] A telling account of the tribulations of these seasons is to be found in the pages of Dr. A. H. Wilson's *A History of the Philadelphia Theatre 1835 to 1855*. Not only was money too scarce, but theatres were too many. The Chestnut, the Walnut, the Arch, and the National, all of them famous establishments, not to mention less eminent houses, opened and closed, lowered prices and raised prices, changed managers, changed actors, and battled each other relentlessly, each struggling to lay hold of those persons who had the cash and the desire for theatrical entertainment.

The state of affairs in Boston was less involved, perhaps less tragic, but, while some companies held their own, there was trouble at the famous Tremont. William W. Clapp in his *Record of the Boston Stage* tells of the efforts of J. S. Jones to keep it afloat. Here too it was: "Open up. Shut up. Raise prices. Lower prices." Nothing seemed to avail. At the close of the season of 1840-1841, he gave up, and the responsibility was assumed by Andrews and Preston[28] with the following outcome: "The result of twenty-five weeks' management found Messrs. Andrews & Preston about ten thousand dollars worse off than at the commencement."[29] The Tre-

[26] *Ibid.*, V, 1.
[27] *Recollections of the Stage*, 464.
[28] P. 375.
[29] *Ibid.*, 379.

COMEDIAN & MANAGER OF THE MOBILE AND ST. LOUIS THEATRES

NOAH M. LUDLOW

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

Dr. Rose pinx Andw. Wallace

Sol. Smith

OF THE SOUTHERN & WESTERN THEATRES

SOL SMITH

(Courtesy of the Missouri Historical Society)

mont's last season, 1842-1843, closed with a "deficiency" of about $3,000. The failure of this famous house Clapp does not attribute necessarily to the nation-wide depression, at least entirely, since it suffered from its small size and from injurious competition, and the Boston Museum, which the Proper Bostonians who hesitated to cross the portals of an undisguised theatre could safely attend for twenty-five cents, did draw audiences. Here, as in New York, people would—or could—pay only a moderate price for dramatic entertainment.

To local causes too can perhaps be ascribed in part the woes of the Dorrance Street Theatre in Providence, but its failure certainly coincided with the collapses in other cities. William H. Russell, assuming the management of the house in 1841, soon closed its doors, deeply involved in debt, though the stockholders, who had charged him a stiff rent, declared a dividend. In 1842 Jamieson and Isherwood[80] undertook to see what they could do, only to fold up their tents and silently steal away after a very short time. The next year it was the same story with the actor Wizeman Marshall at the helm; he soon was compelled to close his doors for lack of patronage.[81] Finally in 1844 the theatre settled the matter once and for all by going up in flames. In the blaze the English lecturer Dr. Dionysius Lardner (of whom more later) lost his precious planetarium. (In fact, there were those who said the fire originated in the little stove that operated this mechanism.)[82]

In Charleston the situation was at first much the same. Stanley Hoole writes that in 1841-1842 "the esteemed manager was losing money. . . . In spite of complimentary newspaper comments, the theatre still failed financially. *London Assurance,* a new play first given on January 9, 1842, was continually repeated, but still Latham lost money."[83] But after this, a new manager, William C. Forbes (like his predecessor an actor, but one with a wider reputation), took over, and by dint featuring famous stars was actually able to prosper.

[80]George O. Willard: *History of the Providence Stage,* 1782-1891, 138

[81]*Ibid.*

[82]*Ibid.*

[83]*The Ante-Bellum Charleston Stage,* 45. W. H. Latham was an actor as well as a manager. He assumed control of the Charleston Theatre in November, 1841.

Slowly conditions righted themselves, and although the managers did not take up permanent residence on Easy Street, their trials grew less painful, and their crises less acute. They succeeded in weathering the storm by virtue of their ingenuity and the fertility of their imaginations. There seems to have been almost no limit to their ability to concoct schemes and expedients, and their artistic consciences were put away against better times. Melodramas, spectacles, horse-operas, acrobats, dwarfs, giants, legless men, armless men, celebrities on the stage and in the boxes—all went into the pot. Individuals went down and disappeared, but somehow the theatre got through the Slough of Despond.

So it was in St. Louis, except that here there was a minimum of competition. Ludlow and Smith were not behind their fellows in inventiveness. Nor were they lacking in courage and determination. However discouraged they became at times, they hung on, and in the end they were able to drag themselves up out of the Slough onto firmer ground. How they accomplished this not inconsiderable feat it is the function of this work to reveal.

II

CURTAIN UP!

Spring of 1840

I hear from St. Louis that McKenzie was to open on the 10th—his reign will be short—but I fear he will annoy you for a time—until the Ravels arrive—

I am about discouraged, & conclude this letter in your words, "sick, sick at heart."

These depressing sentiments flowed from the quill pen of Sol Smith in a letter to Ludlow written from their theatre in Mobile on March 17, 1840. Two days later, his mood unaltered, he made this melancholy entry in his diary: "No managers need envy us now—involved in debt, & sinking as we are."

In "the fell clutch of circumstance" Sol was wont at times to express melancholy thoughts like these, but his blue devils never lingered long and never seem to have curbed his inherent energy. The life of an American theatrical manager was no sinecure in the first half of the nineteenth century, and, as I have pointed out, seldom if ever less so than in the early '40's. Fate played a tantalizing game, raising their hopes and their fortunes, and then rudely shattering both. Less than three years before—on July 9, 1837, to be exact—Smith had written exuberantly in his spasmodically kept journal about the prospects of his firm, but one woe had trod upon another's heels since then. They had lost by fire their two theatres in Mobile, one the successor to the other, together with their stock of wardrobe, scenery, and books. Business had begun to slump, and the debts they had accumulated as a result of these catastrophes weighed heavily on their spirits. They had, moreover, entered upon open warfare with James Caldwell, the great New Orleans gas and theatre magnate, who was intent on driving them out of Mobile, and the outcome was far from certain.

But the immediate cause of Smith's forebodings on this March day was the little touring company of McKenzie and Jefferson, which, a scant three weeks before his firm was scheduled to open its spring season in St. Louis had taken possession of the Concert

Hall on Main Street and announced an attractive program of plays to run an indefinite length of time. Although confident that eventually the established company would win the field, Sol was none too easy in his mind. He knew the Jeffersons.

Perhaps a copy of the February 17 issue of the *Missouri Republican* had reached him in Mobile, where he had been conducting a brief spring season "with a few regulars and two or three amateurs . . . for the purpose of receiving Mr., Mrs., and Miss Barnes."[1] This edition displayed prominently on its second page the following announcement.

A New Theatrical Company

We learn by the Springfield Journal that we are to have the pleasure of witnessing, for a season, the performances of McKenzie's theatrical corpse. Mr. K's. company has been performing in the principal towns of Illinois and has everywhere received the highest applause. His purpose of coming here and the estimation in which he is held by the people of Springfield appear in the following extract from the Journal—:

The Theatrical company which performed in this town during the sitting of the legislature, has left, for Jacksonville, Carrollton, Alton and St. Louis.

As a manifestation of the respect held by our playgoing citizens for Mr. McKenzie, and his exertions to please and gratify the tastes of his highly intellectual patrons of the present season, they gave him an invitation to receive from them a Benefit. This took place on Friday evening last. The room was filled and not a small part of it was occupied with the beauty and fashion of our town.

We commend Mr. McKenzie and his Company to the favorable attention of the play-going people of St. Louis, with whom, we understand it is their intention to remain a few weeks.

Hence Sol's misgivings.

I said above that he knew his Jeffersons. Despite the spelling in the newspaper notice, he must have known that this little aggregation of wandering players was no "corpse," nor yet really a barnstorming troupe in any but the most literal sense of the word. Joseph Jefferson the Third, who, as a small boy of eleven, was one of the less conspicuous members, his future fame as yet undreamed of, recorded in his delightful autobiography that they were on occasion constrained to offer their wares in the most unsuitable of

[1]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 147.

structures, but the persons who made up the little company were in the main experienced actors and, most of them, were members of one of the most gifted and respected families in the combined histories of the British and American stages.

One of the most entertaining portions of the *Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson,* is devoted to the travels and tribulations of the author's father, Joseph Jefferson, Junior—or the Second—the lovable, but improvident son of one celebrated comedian and the father of another, together with his related satellites. Late in 1837 this amiable gentleman, having met with but limited success in the East, yielded to the importunities of his brother-in-law, Alexander McKenzie, and set out with his family for the little western town of Chicago, there to join with his kinsman in the organization of a dramatic company which was, as he saw it, to make his fortune forever more. This was always the way with this cheerful and guileless scion of a famous line. Prosperity was always, if not just around the corner, at least just over the next hillside, and he set out to meet it halfway.

Chicago was reached in 1838, and the wanderers, who had experienced many adventures by the way, were welcomed by the Scotchman and his wife, the former Hester Jefferson. The two men shortly set up in business, but there was no pot of gold at the foot of the Chicago rainbow, and so they pushed on further south in the hope that they had merely mistaken the foot. For approximately four years the Jeffersons were wanderers over that part of the face of the earth which bordered the Mississippi River, travelling from town to town, and giving their performances in any building which could be adapted to their use. Just how long the whole company remained together and exactly where they went is uncertain. The *Autobiography* was not published until 1889, half a century or more after the event, and the passage of time had blurred the memory of the writer. In one place he tells of a season in Springfield, Illinois, where they were saved from disaster by a friendly young lawyer named Abraham Lincoln. Jefferson then goes on to say, "At the end of our Springfield season, my father dissolved partnership with McKenzie and my next remembrance finds us in the town of Memphis."[2] From Memphis they made their way to Mobile where

[2] *Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson,* 31.

the *pater familias* died of yellow fever, thus putting a period to the prolonged hegira. This was in November, 1842. (The Missouri Historical Society has in its possession a letter from Mrs. Jefferson written to Ludlow, who was a close family friend, from Vicksburg on May 2, asking if he could employ her husband as "actor artist or both" and saying that their circumstances were very straitened; but evidently he could do nothing for her. One of his daughters was named for Mrs. Jefferson.) No one knows to this day just where their travels took this family, but the information probably lies hidden away awaiting only the searching of the curious.

The notice from the *Missouri Republican* quoted above is, however, certain evidence that the company was not disbanded after the Springfield season, unless it played more than one engagement in the Illinois capital, as it may well have done, though there is no hint of one in Jefferson's book. When after three weeks in St. Louis in the spring of 1840, the company departed for fresh fields, the *Republican* on March 30 wished it godspeed much as the *Springfield Journal* had done. "They leave, as we understand, for the principal towns on the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, and in parting with them we take pleasure in commending them to the favorable attention of the citizens of the places they visit. We take particular pleasure in commending the managers to the attention and courtesies of our brethren of the press, wherever they may go, under the full conviction that they will find them worthy and deserving of any attention they may show them."

It was the end of March when the company left St. Louis. About two months later, Ludlow and Smith received a very modest letter of application from one Thomas Sankey for a position in their corps. It is dated Fulton, Missouri, May 23, and gives Columbia as the writer's address. He evidently has some sort of engagement from which he thinks he can be released, and he expresses a desire to become a member of a regular company. Since a "Mr. Sankey" was with McKenzie in St. Louis, it seems not unreasonable to conclude that this was the man, and that the Jeffersons were by this time up in central Missouri.

But to return to the St. Louis engagement, and, first, to the personnel of the company. The latter was very largely a family affair.

The partners, as I have said, were brothers-in-law, and most of the others were members of the Jefferson clan. In his *The Jeffersons,* published in 1881, William Winter refers to the senior partner as "the noted actor and manager . . . in the West."[3] He spells the name *Mackenzie,* a spelling I have found nowhere else except sometimes in the newspapers and in Allston Brown's *History of the American Stage,* the latter by no means a wholly reliable authority. I have come across nowhere any record of his participation in any performance in the capacity of an actor. Certainly his name is conspicuously absent from the casts advertised in the *Missouri Republican.*

The junior partner was the grandson of the founder of the dynasty, the gifted eighteenth century actor, Thomas Jefferson, whose son Joseph migrated to America in 1795, and was for years one of the best beloved players on the Philadelphia stage.[4] The young man now in St. Louis was the second son of Joseph the First and at this time about thirty-five years of age. As an actor he failed to scale the heights reached by his father and his grandfather, being regarded as "respectable" rather than brilliant. Whether his relative failure was due to lack of talent or to his sanguine, easygoing nature, it is impossible to say. Of the twenty-four roles which Winter lists as part of his repertory, most are of the kind known as "character parts," for instance, Polonius, Dogberry, the First Witch in *Macbeth,* the first Grave-Digger in *Hamlet,* Crabtree in *The School for Scandal,* and Admiral Franklin in *Sweethearts and Wives.* It will be seen from this that, like his talented father, he was associated even as a young man with elderly characters. He also had an aptitude for painting (inherited by his son) and frequently turned it to good use.

Mrs. Jefferson was actually a much more important person than her husband, although by 1840 her star was no longer in the ascendant. As Mrs. Thomas Burke, she had attained recognition as one of the finest singers in the United States; Joseph the Third states that she had been "the leading prima donna of the country."[5] But that glory was a thing of the past. Having been born in 1796,

[3]P 396.
[4]*Ibid,* 52.
[5]*Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson,* 54.

she was now in her forty-fourth year. She had married Jefferson in 1826, shortly after the death of Burke. "In the spring of 1837," says Allston Brown in his *History of the American Stage,* "she reappeared in New York after an absence of ten years, during which, time had made such sad havoc with her voice and appearance that few of her warmest admirers could recognize in her the idol of their earlier days. She died in Philadelphia, in 1850, of a lingering consumption." It is obvious, then, that the lady who came to St. Louis in 1840 had lost much, if not most, of her attraction. Yet she still occasionally attempted youthful heroines, especially when the part called for a song.

With her she brought her three children, the eldest being Charles Saint Thomas Burke, a gifted boy of eighteen who somehow failed to realize in his short life the great success his talents appeared to promise. Between him and his half brother, Joseph the Third, five years his junior, there existed a great devotion. The latter, together with his little sister Cornelia, was with the company in St. Louis.

But we have by no means exhausted the family list. There were also two of Jefferson's five sisters, Mrs. McKenzie and Mrs. Ingersoll. The former, true to the family tradition, devoted most of her efforts to characters of advanced age and was useful as a stock actress. Like so many of this small aggregation she passed from this mortal scene not long after the season under our scrutiny, dying in Nashville in 1845 while still in her thirties. Mrs. Ingersoll was Mary Anne, the fourth of the sisters. She too made a career of the stage without spectacular results. Her husband, the tragedian David Ingersoll, had some reputation;[6] she later married James Wright, a prompter at Wallack's Theatre in New York, and retired to private life.

Younger than her sister and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Ingersoll fell heir to most of the leading business. Some of the romantic heroines, however, were entrusted to her niece, Mrs. J. C. Germon, formerly Jane Anderson, who, with her husband, completed the family circle. Something over twelve years later this young couple were to win fame as Uncle Tom and Eliza in the famous George Aiken version

[6]Allston Brown in his *History of the American Stage* says Ingersoll died in St. Louis in 1847, but I have found no confirmation in any local newspaper.

of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.[7] But fortune did not smile on them long, for in 1854 Germon followed Little Eva to Heaven, and his widow followed the path of her relatives. Winter asserts: "She has had a bright career on the stage, and is a superior representative of old women."[8]

Of the twelve persons who constituted the McKenzie-Jefferson "corpse," eight have been accounted for. The remaining four, who were not members of the famous clan, were of no particular consequence, and their names were "writ in water." To one, Sol Smith does pay tribute in his *Theatrical Management*. He says there that Sankey, "if he had lived, would have become one of the best actors of old men the American stage ever produced"; but, unfortunately, he was drowned a couple of years after this engagement.[9] "Mr. Leicester," to whose lot fell most of the male leads, is something of a mystery. I have found in various works on stage history mention of an individual, or, quite possibly, of more than one individual bearing that name, but invariably without any Christian name attached. According to Brown, he—or one of them—made his debut at the Richmond Hill Theatre in New York in 1830.[10] But this is one of the Colonel's mistakes, for that theatre (located in the old home of Aaron Burr) did not open until 1831; and when it does open, Dr. Odell does not mention Mr. Leicester as being among those present. He does identify him (?) as a "popular singer of negro songs" at the Franklin in September, 1836. The fact that the Ingersolls were there at the same time would suggest that perhaps some friendship or connection was formed. Later in the same volume Dr. Odell reports that he played Ben Beauty in an *opus* entitled *Gamblers of the Mississippi and the Idiot Girl* at the same popular-priced house.[11] But in St. Louis he neither sang "Ethiopian songs" nor performed the part of a card-shark on the Father of Waters. It seems strange that a man who had made a name for himself in one particular form of amusement would so soon have

[7]He was not actually, as William Winter asserts (*The Jeffersons*, 95), the original Uncle Tom. But he was the first in a really adequate dramatization of the novel.

[8]Winter: *The Jeffersons*, 95.

[9]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 156.

[10]Brown. *The American Stage*.

[11]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 151 and 397.

abandoned his trump card, but "Mr. L." was neither the first nor the last comedian who aspired to the prestige of the leading man. C. L. Green was probably a former member of the Ludlow and Smith entourage who had distinguished himself during the preceding season by appearing on the stage when drunk and reducing both his fellow players and his audience to hysterics. Of the one remaining member of the group, a man named Sullivan, I know nothing.

Such was the make-up of the company which opened the twenty-sixth season of the St. Louis stage. The Jeffersons were an exceptionally gifted and universally respected set of people, and, moreover, persons of breeding and taste. They were artists by inheritance. St. Louis may well have extended them a cordial hand.

If the newspaper accounts are to be accepted at their face value, this cordial hand was not withheld, for the company remained in town three weeks, giving nineteen performances apparently to gratifying business, and finally departed only when the arrival of the "established company" made further lingering injudicious. St. Louis was not yet large enough to support two companies. The editorial comments in the *Missouri Republican* and the *Commercial Bulletin,* if not extended, are invariably more or less complimentary. On Wednesday, March 11, a writer in the former had this to say: "Messrs. McKenzie & Jefferson's company opened on Monday evening in Concert Hall, to a very crowded house, and were received with great applause. The principal characters were, with a few exceptions, well sustained. Last night they were greeted with a good house, and the performance went off better than on the preceding evening The house has been well fitted up for the purpose." Subsequent editorial comments are all in the same vein. On March 19 the paper observed, "We are pleased to see that they are nightly greeted with full houses. They deserve and receive encouragement." Equally laudatory comment came from the *Daily Evening Gazette,* which on March 20, printed the following commentary: "The exertions of the company of Messrs. Jefferson & Mackenzie are such as to entitle them to the applause of play-lovers; and we believe have been rewarded by pretty full houses. The scenery, dresses and decorations give evidence that no proper pains or expense has been spared upon them; the scenery is specially worthy of remark for its uncommon beauty." So business seems to have been good,

though it would be safer to accept the *Gazette's* "pretty full houses" than the *Republican's* "full houses." Publicity may have been still in its infancy, but it was old enough to have learned some tricks. Furthermore, William B. Wood, who was long one of the managers of the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, says in his memoirs that on only one night in forty-seven years did he ever see a full house, and that when he was terrified "for fear of a panic."[12]

I shall not dwell at length upon all the McKenzie and Jefferson performances, but shall cite only those which seem to call for particular attention. The full list appears in the appendix.

THEATRE

Messrs. MacKenzie & Jefferson respectfully announce to the citizens of St. Louis that they have fitted up the Splendid Ball Room in Concert Hall, for Dramatic representations.

On Monday, March 9, will be presented

THE LADY OF LYONS

or, Love and Pride

Claude Melnotte	Mr. Leicester
Colonel Damas	Mr. Jefferson
Deschapelles	Mr. Sankey
Madame Deschapelles	Mrs. Jefferson
Pauline Deschapelles	" Ingersoll
Dame Melnotte	" Mackenzie

After the Play

Song "The Last of Gowrie"	Mrs. Germon
Comic Song	*Master* Jefferson
Sailor's Hornpipe	Mr. Burke

To Conclude with

An Affair of Honor

Major Limsky	Mr. C. L. Green
Martha	Mrs. Germon

[12]William B. Wood: *Personal Recollections of the Stage*, 275.

> Doors open at 7; performance to commence at half past 7 precisely.
>
> Tickets to parquette, 75 cents each; tickets at back of parquette, 50 cents each; gallery for persons of color, 50 cents.

But the editor of the *Republican,* in whose paper the above spread appeared, was not without his doubts concerning the "Splendid Ball Room." In a brief item referring to the prospective entertainment of the evening he observed: "The room, as all must be aware, is not adapted to pieces requiring much scenic effect, nor will it in other respects be free from slight objections, for these disadvantages the audience will of course be prepared to make allowance." So the public was warned in advance not to expect the luxuries of the St. Louis Theatre, where actually each person in the parquet had a seat to himself instead of having to share a bench with assorted fellow citizens, a real novelty in theatre conveniences.

So much for the opening night. The bill on the second night, which, according to the *Republican,* "went off better," featured Kotzebue's *The Stranger* with Mrs. Ingersoll and Leicester again playing the leading business. Most of the others were involved, Mrs. Jefferson as "Savoyard—with a song." This lugubrious favorite was followed by "a variety of Singing and Dancing" and *The Spectre Bridegroom,* the cast of which was not announced. The singing and dancing were included in every bill; the youngsters must contribute their mites.

On March 12, Leicester appeared as Alessandro Massaroni in *The Brigand*—"During the play all the original music" and "The Brigand Gun Waltz by eight Ladies and Gentlemen." The dancers are not identified in the advertisement, but they were almost certainly practically "the strength of the company." The second piece was the Irving-Payne *Charles II* with Leicester as the amorous king, Germon as Rochester, Sankey as Captain Copp, Mrs. McKenzie as Lady Clara, and Mrs. Jefferson (despite her age) as Mary Copp "with the song of 'Sweet Home.'" "Home, Sweet Home" was one of the lady's specialties and was here bodily transferred from one Payne play to another.

Two evenings later St. Louis Dickens enthusiasts had their first chance to meet one of their favorite heroes in the flesh, as it were.

Oliver Twist had not yet been three years off the presses in its original form; so as a drama it was a distinct novelty. It had been given at the Park Theatre in New York in February, 1839, though whether or not in the same adaptation there is no way of telling.[13] It was the custom to entrust boy parts to young women, and so it fell to Mrs. Germon's lot to introduce the workhouse lad to St. Louis. Obviously the typesetter of the *Republican* did not know his Dickens, for he cast Sankey as "Faguire." The Jeffersons played Mr. and Mrs. Bumble, and Leicester, Monks. No other characters are listed in the advertisement in the *Republican* of March 14. "If plaudits are any mark of approbation," observed the same paper two days later, "the performance was well liked."

"*The Lady of the Lake* was played on Tuesday night, and we are correct in saying it was never performed better in St. Louis. The scenery was appropriate and in a style superior to anything we expected to see." So reported the *Republican* on March 21. The comment on the scenery might be taken as damning with faint praise, because it will be recalled that the same editor had expected very little, as well he might, in the way of scenic effects in the transmogrified ballroom. At the same time, it should be remembered that Jefferson was exceptionally clever with the brush, and to his talents were undoubtedly due the surprising sets. In the performance Leicester was Roderick Dhu, Germon Fitz-James, Mrs. Ingersoll Ellen, and Mrs. Jefferson Blanche. (The paper was wrong in stating that the Scott opus was done on Tuesday; examination of the advertisements shows that it was seen on Thursday, two nights later.)

On March 23, what might in the language of to-day be termed "the second feature" was *Rip Van Winkle* or *The Demons of the Catskill Mountains*. The sub-title indicates that this was the version by John Kerr, an English actor, which had been presented at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in 1829, and in which both James H. Hackett and William Chapman had played the title role.[14] Few plays in modern stage history have gone through more metamorphoses than this long-popular romance, which held the stage continuously from 1828 to 1903. This is not the place

[13]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 283.

[14]Arthur Hobson Quinn: *History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War*, 326 ff.

for a detailed account of the various versions, especially as an admirable analysis is available in Dr. Arthur Hobson Quinn's *History of the American Drama.* None except the Kerr version employed the sub-title named above.

Almost from the first, the play was associated with the Jefferson family. The first Philadelphia cast included Mrs. S. Chapman, still another sister of Joseph the Second, and also a "J. Jefferson" who, Dr. Quinn thinks, was a brother John, but who may have been Joseph. Both at times played minor roles. In St. Louis, however, the latter played the lead as he occasionally did, although he never achieved in the part the success scored by his stepson or, later, by his son, Joseph the Third, not to mention Hackett. It is too bad that no St. Louis critic had the foresight to review the performance so that some conception of the interpretation might have come down to us. It is interesting that young Burke, later famous for his own Rip, was on this evening the Demon of the Mountain. Probably young Joe was one of the children. Their mother was Dame Van Winkle, and Green was Knickerbocker. Unfortunately that is all we know.

Only one other production by this company calls for particular mention. This was another novelty, Planché's *High Low Jack and the Game,* which, according to the *Republican,* was marked by certain unusual features. I quote from the advertisement on March 26: "The music selected from the best hands. The new suits from original paintings, in the possession of everybody. A deal of machinery cut by Mr. McCabe. The new scenery dealt out by Messrs. Jefferson & Schinotti."[15] The cast: King of Clubs—Jefferson, King of Spades—Green, Knave of Hearts—Germon, Queen of Spades—Mrs. 'Mackenzie,' and Queen of Hearts—Mrs. Germon. This was, according to the records, a "first time in St. Louis."

Unhappily for the itinerant managers, the "established company" now arrived on the scene and opened its doors, and patently there was nothing for them to do but bow to the inevitable and resume their travels. On March 28, the day after Charles Burke's eighteenth birthday, as a final gesture, they gave repeats of *Cherry and Fair*

[15]Undoubtedly J. F. Schinotti, actor and scene-painter, formerly with Ludlow and Smith (Carson. *The Theatre on the Frontier,* 268 and 297).

Star and *The Invincibles* or *Les Femmes Soldats.* Mr. Germon sang a song, and they were off with the journalistic blessings quoted above.

* * *

THEATRE—A CARD

The ladies and gentlemen attached to the St. Louis Theatrical corps will please meet at the Theatre on Thursday afternoon, 26th inst. at the following hours, for the purpose of understanding business relative to the opening of the season, viz;

Carpenters, Scene-shifters and Door-keepers, will meet the Stage Manager at his office, at 9—the Actors, in the Green Room at 10—the Musicians in the Music Room at half past 11—the officers of other departments, on the stage at half-past 9 o'clock.

(*Daily Bulletin,* March 26, 1840)

The year 1840 was not a happy one for Ludlow and Smith, either as a firm or individually. The reader of their published recollections gets the impression that it was one they would gladly forget, for their records for that twelve-month are little more than chronicles of woe. The letters and the diary of Smith make even more melancholy reading. And yet, according to Ludlow in an affidavit made apparently in 1868 during the course of his legal troubles with his former partner, it was *"not a losing one"* even though it "had not been as prosperous as the three preceding ones."[18]

Smith I have already quoted. Turning to his correspondence with Ludlow, we find that as early as January 21 he was frantic about money matters, and also about the maddening Ravel family. This group of acrobats and pantomimists constituted an attraction of potent drawing power, one to whose engagements distressed managers were in the habit of looking for relief. But the Ravels had, at least in the opinion of Smith, "stood him up" the previous fall and still were causing him no end of grief. On January 13 he addressed a letter to Gabriel Ravel in Montgomery, Alabama, stating that he expected him in Mobile and expressing the "hope by your performing

[18]This affidavit is in the Harvard College Library. In it Ludlow states that, according to this estimate, he and Smith were in 1840 jointly worth between "70 & 80 thousand dollars . . . at a fair valuation by me of our property." In another memorandum (also at Harvard) he estimates his own private fortune at $41,000, "chiefly in real estate in Mobile." He says the amount may have been larger.

in our new theatre here you will make up for the disappointment we experienced by your failure to meet your engagement with us in St. Louis in Nov. last." But his hopes were vain. On the twenty-first he wrote Ludlow: "They prefer fitting up places, & playing by themselves—have scenery and everything with them, etc. say they took $1100 in 3 nights, in Macon. . . . I am nearly crazy." The next day he resumed. The struggle with the liberty-loving Frenchmen was continuing. They were demanding "outrageous terms." Moreover, there was money due on his house in Mobile, and his wife had the mumps. On April 3, a week after the opening of the St. Louis season, he wrote: "My house goes to-morrow—for I find it utterly impossible to raise $320—or even 320 cents—I am hot for going to Oregon provided a good fire-proof Balloon is available." Of the Ravels more anon.

Smith, however, was not alone in feeling pinched financially. The complaint was a national one following the political struggles over the banking policies of the government in Washington. St. Louis had not escaped the general depression, nor, on the other hand, the current political distractions. Writing to his daughter (Mrs. Wm. Glasgow, Jr.), on May 26, Dr. Wm. Carr Lane, who had just completed his ninth term as mayor, commented thus on local conditions: "Hereabouts, things are pretty much as you left them—Business dull;—rents declining—politicks raging;—money scarce;—Log-cabbins & hard cider much in fashion;—concerts,—Theatricals etc., but no Dancing parties."[17] In another letter, dated two months later, the Doctor expressed the opinion that better times lay just ahead—prosperity was just around the corner; unfortunately, he was just as dismally mistaken as was a much more celebrated statesman nearly a century later. Ludlow and Smith, like many others, were merely on the threshold of their troubles.

In his *Theatrical Management* Smith says flatly, "As I was personally present in St. Louis but a very short time during the season of 1840, I propose to omit nearly all particulars of its prog-

[17]Dr. Lane had been the first Mayor of St Louis, having been first elected in 1823. Re-elected annually for five years, he then was out of office until 1838, when he completed the unfinished term of John H. Darby; he was thereafter elected twice more. (These letters are in the possession of the author.)

MRS. FARREN.

MARY ANN FARREN

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

E. S CONNER

AS ROMEO

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

ress."[18] And he is as good as his word, dismissing the season in a minimum of lines. When the company came north from Mobile, it was shepherded by the senior partner, and Sol merely paid flying visits from time to time.

Ludlow is not loquacious upon the subject, but he has more to say than has his colleague, and from his *Dramatic Life* it is possible to glean some relevant facts.[19] As I have said, he arrived with his cohorts while the McKenzie-Jefferson company was still performing in Concert Hall.

The company which he brought up the river was, irrespective of the lustre shed by visiting stars, an adequate one; perhaps it would not have been so considered at the Park, the Chestnut, or the Walnut, but in the hinterland, though not so strong as some later ones, it was quite acceptable. It would have been more than that had it had in it all the people listed by Ludlow. As is so often the case, however, his roll is incorrect. He is right in claiming Mr. and Mrs. George P. Farren, "Old Joe" Cowell, and Mr. and Mrs. Hezekiah Bateman. But his memory was playing him tricks when he included Mrs. W. H. Smith and Tom Placide, neither of whom appeared on the scene until 1844. Overlooked by him but mentioned in the newspaper notices were a number of others with whom I shall deal as the occasion arises.

Yet, even so, the aggregation embraced considerable ability. In the first place, both Ludlow and Smith were talented and experienced comedians, old troupers who definitely "knew their way about," though perhaps Smith should not be counted, since he made but one appearance in this spring season. They seldom acted serious parts, never, I think, voluntarily. In the absence of his partner, Ludlow was very active, in fact more so than was his custom. What is more, when his name appeared in the advertisements, it was usually printed in capitals like the stars'; this too was contrary to the usual local practice.

The Farrens were probably the most valuable members of the company. They had joined it the previous spring, and were to be for several years among the managers' most useful adherents. I was about to say among "the most dependable." That adjective could

[18]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 150.
[19]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 521.

very aptly be applied to Mrs. Farren, the former Mary Ann Russell—to no one more so—but not exactly to her husband, who is said to have been a son of Percy Farren, "the Dublin manager" and the nephew of the celebrated English comedian William Farren.[20] George, who served his employers in the dual role of actor (especially of old men) and stage manager, appears to have been a particularly lovable sort of person, but he was not remarkable for sobriety and was by no means dependable. The partners were devoted to him as a man, but their correspondence shows that he tried their patience sorely. He stumbled, repented, was forgiven, stumbled again, and so on through the years. He seems always to have been forgiven, partly for his own sake and partly for that of his admirable wife, and neither manager has a word to say against him in his memoirs. Their affection evidently was duplicated by that of the theatre-going public.

According to Olive Logan in her *Before the Footlights and Behind the Scenes,* Mrs. Farren was forty-nine years old in 1869.[21] If her computation is correct, the future star began her career at an extremely early age inasmuch as she made her debut, at the Chatham Garden Theatre in New York, in 1824.[22] Many actors and actresses have accomplished their debuts practically in infancy, but four is a bit young for the Page in *The Purse,* and on the basis of other bits of evidence I venture to doubt Miss Logan's figure. For a number of years she accompanied her parents in their wanderings and, together with her younger brother, was seen—sometimes, indeed, featured—in various and sundry juvenile roles. A sketch of her life in an unidentified newspaper clipping in the Theatre Collection of the Harvard College Library states that she retired from the public eye for a while and then returned to the stage as Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* "with no little *éclat.*" But she soon abandoned opera for the legitimate and was identified with it throughout a long and honorable career. Says Smith: "Mrs. Farren I have known from her childhood. She is the daughter of the late Richard Russell, manager of the Camp Street Theatre [New Orleans]. She remained with me for eight years, and I may truly say

[20] *The Autobiography of Clara Fisher Maeder,* 8.
[21] P. 439.
[22] Odell: *Annals,* III, 125.

that this excellent woman and fine actress always did her duty, and much more."[23] Now in her twenties she had attained the stature of leading lady. Five years later she and her husband decided that they were ready to assume the risks and rewards of stardom, and set out on their own. She met with success and was for many years one of the important actresses on the American stage.

. . . Mrs. Farren possesses a fine person, a classical head and features, the varying play of which is fitted to express every phase of tragic emotion, while in repose they indicate that high order which her conceptions of character and her readings of the great tragic poets attest. Add to this a voice powerful, deep and musical, evincing thorough cultivation, gestures graceful and chastened, and attitudes statuesque and impressive. . . . Moreover, she never follows the bad example of some performers of celebrity, who waste all their strength on the rendering of brilliant points and passages, neglecting the links that connect them. Mrs. Farren aims rather at massing the details of a character . . . presenting a harmonious and impressive whole, rather than bringing into high relief salient peculiarities. Her energy, in the most, is never exaggerated into ranting, nor does her calmness subside into tameness. Her physical and mental energies are completely under the control of a refined taste and severe judgment.[24]

A review in *The Albion* of January 22, 1848, quoted by Dr. Odell does not, I think, contradict this laudatory appraisal. ". . . Her face lacked 'strong tragic expression,' but should 'light up charmingly' in comedy. 'Her voice is sweetly toned, deep, and singularly harmonious'; unfortunately, she adopted 'the now almost exploded, chanting, pompous style'; and her performance in the Gamester was conventional. Yet 'there was an occasional gleam of the intelligent feeling woman that beamed out delightfully.' "[25]

I have given this much space to Mary Ann Farren because, if Ludlow and Smith are our leading men, she certainly is our leading lady.

Old Joe Cowell was in 1840 perhaps one of the best known actors on the stage in this country. He was a rather crabby codger, at this time about forty-eight years of age, though, it would seem, generally regarded as an old man. The first twenty-nine years of

[23]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 136.
[24]Unidentified newspaper clipping in Harvard College Library.
[25]Odell: *Annals*, V, 338.

his life had been passed in his native England, the last nineteen in this country, where he was a familiar figure in practically all cities and towns with any claim to theatrical importance. His *Thirty Years Passed Among the Players of England and America,* published in 1844, added some measure to his fame, but scarcely to his popularity, his barbed and caustic comments upon various associates causing no little irritation in many quarters. He had joined Ludlow and Smith the previous fall and had settled down in St. Louis with the apparent intention of making it his home.

Both his daughter and his son-in-law became eventually figures of greater consequence in the world of the theatre than he himself. Sidney Cowell had married Hezekiah Linthicum Bateman in St. Louis in November, 1839. She was destined for importance in several roles—as herself a clever actress and also a successful playwright, as the wife of an important manager, and as the mother and mentor of two of the most incredible infant prodigies who ever caused sensations on the stage when they should have been at home in the nursery.[26]

Bateman himself was a competent, but by no means a sensational actor, a fact which he appears to have recognized himself since he did not persevere in the profession. In later years he devoted his time chiefly to management, especially to directing the tours of his daughters. Ludlow credits him with the introduction of French *opéra bouffe* into this country.[27] Eventually he went to England, where he had the shrewdness to see something in an obscure young actor named Henry Irving. It was he who, rather reluctantly according to Gordon Craig, launched that young man upon his great career in *The Bells.*[28]

[26]Kate and Ellen Bateman. On December 19, 1849, "These prodigies opened in the fifth act of Richard III, with Kate as Richmond, and Ellen as Richard." During the same engagement Ellen played Shylock to the Portia of her sister in the Trial Scene of *The Merchant of Venice,* and Lady Macbeth to the Macbeth of Kate (Odell, V, 517). "Every fresh character they undertook was a surprise, and was considered more clever than any that had preceded it. Lady Macbeth was, perhaps, the most successful of Ellen's assumptions, while Kate read Portia with amazing skill and propriety; her delivery of the familiar lines was finished, and her carriage throughout was that of an experienced artist" (Laurence Hutton: *Curiosities of the American Stage,* 242). In 1849 Kate was six years old, and Ellen four.

[27]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 527.

[28]Gordon Craig: *Henry Irving,* 42.

These players constituted the front line of the company. The rest were, I judge, what in the language of the day was called "respectable," an adjective applied, not to their morals—though they may have been above approach—but to their abilities. Certainly no aspersions were ever cast upon the virtues of Mrs. Farren's mother, Mrs. Richard Russell, who was on hand to play dowagers and other elderly females of any and all stations of society. She was the widow of an old associate who had tried his hand at management all the way from Boston to New Orleans, and was a long-time friend of both her employers. She was forty-eight years old. Ludlow describes her as "a very pretty woman with brilliant black eyes."[29] With her daughter and son-in-law, she had become a member of the company the previous fall.

A "Miss Stanard" (sometimes spelled "Stannard") was probably Rachel, one of two sisters listed by Allston Brown.[30] She had been on and off the St. Louis stage since the days of the Salt House. He gives the place of her birth as England, the year 1800. Consequently she was in 1840 no slip of a girl, a fact I am not sure that she grasped. Ludlow, who nevertheless kept on engaging her, goes so far as to say that, five years before this season, "she was unfit by age or talents to perform the business to which she aspired."[31] She not only aspired to roles like Ophelia and Diana Vernon, but also was given to executing broadsword and Austrian hornpipe dances. There is absolutely no evidence that she ever achieved the slightest popularity.

For leads in farces and burlettas, there was Miss Morgan, first name unknown. As a matter of fact, I seriously question if this lady really had a first name. I have pursued her relentlessly through any number of volumes on the history of the American stage, and, in those in which she gets herself mentioned at all, she is invariably "Miss Morgan." At least, I conclude that it is she because she is always (except once) cast in light singing parts. Whoever she was, she seems eternally to have had a song on her lips. Both William B. Wood and Dr. A. H. Wilson report her as warbling in Philadelphia, the latter mentioning her as Donna Anna

[29]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 216.
[30]*The American Stage.*
[31]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 441.

in *Don Juan,* if indeed it really was she in this trying role.[32] In May, 1838, she was imported by the Park in New York to sing Zerlina in a single performance of *Fra Diavolo.*[33] Now she was in St. Louis, but no such roles fell to her lot in this city.

Three male members of the *corps dramatique* were carry-overs from the preceding season. Only one of these was remembered by either of the managers in their recollections. This was "Paddy" Larkin, who had originally been engaged to perform the part of the Prince in the revival of *Cinderella* in Mobile in 1837. Ludlow says he was "a man of considerable musical capacity as a tenor singer, but unfortunately possessed of a very exalted opinion of his own abilities, which, in spite of that proverbial *modesty* attendant on Irishmen, would at times makes itself apparent, to the discomfort of those who might be performing in the same piece with him."[34]

The other two men, the ones passed over in silence by Ludlow and Smith, were Marsh and McConechy respectively. The former had "joined up" in 1838 and played "heavy" roles to the satisfaction of all concerned. He had, furthermore, established himself in Sol's good graces until he had run amok during Forrest's engagement in the spring of 1839, being hissed for playing his part in what amounted to dumb show and later cursing the popular ingénue Eliza Petrie in her dressing-room. He was discharged, but soon was reinstated and apparently caused no further trouble.[35] As for McConechy, in a letter to Ludlow written on the installment plan April 10 to 14, 1839, Smith characterizes him as "an old *steady* sterling stock actor, (tho' a young man) without any particularly shining qualities about him." But an anonymous writer in the *Daily Evening Gazette* of April 15, on noting his return, observed, "Look out for broad grins the remainder of the season."

So much for the line-up. Now to get on with the spring season of 1840, which was formally launched on the evening of March 26.

[32]Wood: *Personal Recollections,* 403; Arthur Herman Wilson: *A History of the Philadelphia Theatre, 1835-1855,* 181.

[33]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 205.

[34]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 473.

[35]Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier,* 283.

The play selected for the opening was the same as that chosen by McKenzie and Jefferson for their first night, the redoubtable *Lady of Lyons*. E. S. Conner, appearing as the first star, was the Claude, and Mrs. Farren the Pauline. The afterpiece was the operetta *No!* or *The Glorious Minority* with Miss Morgan making her local debut and singing "several popular songs." The performance, according to the *Missouri Republican,* which reviewed it two days later, was all it should have been. "On the opening of the St. Louis Theatre," it records, "the company was greeted by a full house, and welcomed by plaudits long and loud." In this judgment the other newspapers concurred. A lengthy letter published by the *Gazette* on March 28 is in style so typical of dramatic criticism in the "Far West" during the Fabulous Forties that it is perhaps worthy of quotation in full. Moreover, it does give some information.

THEATRICAL—Mr. Editor: Did you attend the Theatre last evening—the St. Louis Theatre, I mean? No? Well, I did. The first thing that attracted my attention was the Orchestra—familiar faces all—[In a subsequent communication, a few days later, he confessed to a mistake on that point] the same we had last year, and that's praise quite sufficient for the present, for they play as well, and their music is as grand, harmonious, and delightful as ever—if you doubt it—go and hear for yourselves. The Overture played dingle, dingle, gingle—"And up rose the yellow"—No, red curtain—and there as lovely as ever sat the representative of Pauline, in the Lady of Lyons—Mrs. Farren, and by her side Mrs. Russell, both favorites. They met with a warm and hearty welcome from the audience—assuring them that they had not been forgotten, as did each and one of the last years stock who have now returned and appears. To say that Mrs. Farren played well would be no praise at all—so I'll only say, the performance was in her best style—there—hem! Conner played Claude to the life—true, in his description of the Palace by the lake of Como he was not as great as Forrest—but as a whole, he plays the part, and looks *the thing,* much better. He has one great secret, which is more than half the battle, he's a beautiful dresser. Messrs. Bateman, Marsh, Farren—ah! I beg your pardon old friend—you play as well as ever, so do they all, "clever dogs." The play went off remarkably well, and to the entire satisfaction of a large and respectable audience, with one exception Farren, your scene shifters make too much noise in changing wings, &, in some of the most quiet scenes—it's very annoying.

The afterpiece was the Musical Farce of "no! or the glorious Minority"—in which Miss Morgan appeared. She sings sweetly, very sweetly, and was loudly and warmly encored in one of her songs—she's bound to be a favorite for she had the Majority on her side. Mrs. Bateman, the pretty little Miss Cowell, that used to be, and Mrs. Page, also appeared, and received warm receptions—they are welcome.

MORE ANON.

There will be "more anon" from this correspondent. For a while he keeps us *au courant* with affairs on the stage at Third and Olive. I only wish that he had continued to do so throughout the season, for, whatever the vagaries of his literary style, he did manifest a critical judgment which comes to our assistance from time to time.

The season was off to a good start. The auguries for clear sailing were auspicious. Conner was, if not quite all some contemporary blurbs proclaimed him to be, certainly a very competent actor. Ludlow describes him as "a very fine-looking young man—in person well-fitted for the character; he was tall, well-proportioned, and in his assumption of the *Prince of Como* might have been reasonably supposed to have sprung from an aristocratic stock."[86] Dr. Odell says "he became a very well-known tragedian, and, if he never attained the highest rank, he was counted for years a very respectable actor."[87] Phelps in his *Players of a Century* credits him with "good taste, fine head, graceful person and excellent elocutionary powers."[88] If Allston Brown is correct, he was at this time, thirty-one years old.[89] Obviously the two St. Louis managers had laid hold of a leading man who was worthy of their company. Moreover, even if he did not have the box office potency of a sensational star, he was very well liked in the community and his employers were not unaware of his value.

One thing definitely in Conner's favor was the fact that he gave the public an opportunity to see worth-while plays. During his fortnight in town he appeared, not only as Claude Melnotte, but also as Richelieu (a part which Phelps asserts he played 877 times),[40]

[86]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 541.
[87]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 209
[88]P. 247.
[89]*The American Stage*. He spells the name *Connor*.
[40]Phelps: *Players of a Century*, 146.

Angelo in *Tortesa the Usurer* (N. P. Willis' poetic drama), Richard III, and Coriolanus. We to-day may hesitate to call *The Lady of Lyons* or *Richelieu* a worth-while play, but a century ago and for decades thereafter they were certainly so regarded. *King Richard III* also enjoyed a tremendous vogue (pretty well dissipated today); *Coriolanus* was a complete novelty.

During this engagement Conner was seen fifteen times, his first appearance being on March 26, his last on April 11. While in St. Louis he was not an idle man. He took part in fifteen different plays, in three of them twice, and in one three times. On five evenings he was featured, not only in the main play, but in the afterpiece as well. The range was wide, from Coriolanus and Richelieu on the one hand to Charles Paragon in *Perfection* on the other. The critics of the moment were on the job. Possibly I should have said "the critic," for I am not at all positive that the same enthusiast did not cast his bread upon many waters.

Conner's second role was Angelo in *Tortesa the Usurer* With him in the cast were Farren in the title role, Mrs. Farren as Isabella, Mrs. Bateman as Zippa, and Cowell as Tomaso. The afterpiece was *My Young Wife and My Old Umbrella,* in which the principal business was in the hands of Old Joe and his daughter. Then came Bulwer's new play, *The Sea Captain,* a work which had been none too favorably received elsewhere. The star was seen as Norman, Mrs. Farren as Lady Arundel, and Mrs. Bateman as Violet. When it was over, Paddy Larkin displayed his mastery of Irish brogue as Terry O'Rourke, alias Dr. O'Toole in *The Irish Tutor.*

Anonymous was ready with his pen and has left us in the *Gazette* of March 30, an account of proceedings on both occasions. He begins with qualified praise for the Willis *opus.*

> Not that it is a piece so very effective, when represented on the stage; but read it, and if you have a soul for poetry—*beautiful,* not grand—you will not be content with a mere glance at the contents. . . . The character of TORTESA is decidedly the part and FARREN, though out of his professed line, played it well and acted it better; he has a good conception of it. It was, and is, many times, very difficult to understand him from some parts of the house; he has a sort of guttural articulation which occasions many of the beauties of his acting to be lost. It is unpleasant, especially so, in

speaking poetry. Farren if you can correct it. CONNER'S Angelo was excellent—he played the young enthusiastic artist to the life; he did not overact, nor does he ever "split the ears of the groundlings" for the sake of eliciting unmerited applause. His conception of Angelo is original, and it shows him to be a man of mind, and a discreet actor. MRS. FARREN deserves high praise for the manner in which she played Isabella—not faultless, to be sure, but, "take it all," it was a most rich and exquisite piece of acting. Space will not allow me to particularize the beauties as I could wish, but the *picture scene,* shall I describe it? No, "it beggars all description"; it must be *seen*—my pen cannot do it justice. The whole went off to the satisfaction of the audience.

He then goes on to commend the orchestra for its playing of the overture to *Der Freischütz,* and to dismiss the farce with " 'The least said' & you know the rest." By *The Sea Captain* he was definitely not impressed; he found it too unnatural. "Mrs. Farren, Conner, Farren and Bateman, did themselves credit in their several characters; the rest were but 'so so!' " Larkin was "well received by his old friends; and he played the part of Terry O'Rourke in his very best style, calling forth from the audience shouts and roars of laughter. We hope soon to hear him sing—sing—anything you choose, Larkin, except the 'Coronation.' " What makes *Anonymous* valuable to-day is his refusal to limit his critiques to generalizations and sweet-scented bouquets. After reading one of his effusions, we can assume that we know at least a little about the nature of the proceedings.

The critic who reported on *The Sea Captain* for the *Republican* (March 30) did not agree with him about Bulwer's latest creation. He liked it. "It is an admirable thing. The narrative is not interspersed with the brilliant flights of fancy found in Willi's play of *Tortesa* but the plot is more ingenious and exciting—Lady Arundell, the most difficult character of the play was nobly acted by Mrs. Farren; and the Sea Captain by Mr. Conner was also performed to admiration. The characters were all well sustained and we hope to see this beautiful play repeated." This correspondent had his wish, for *The Sea Captain* was repeated on April 1, being followed by *Perfection* with, as I have said above, the star in the part of Charles Paragon, and also with Mrs. Farren as Kate O'Brien "(with songs)," Farren as Sir Lawrence, and Cowell as Sam. According to an advertisement in the *Republican, The Sea Captain* was repeated by request. Publicity?

Before this repetition, however, Conner had held forth as Richelieu and Richard III. Unfortunately *Anonymous* neglected his duty. But the other papers do tell us who made up the star's support. In *Richelieu* Mrs. Farren, of course, played Julie, and Bateman was De Mauprat. The "entertainments concluded" with the comic opera *Of Age Tomorrow* with Ludlow making his first appearance of the season in no less than five different roles, and Miss Morgan, as Maria, singing "several favorite pieces of music." In *Richard III,* on March 31, Bateman played Richmond, Marsh Buckingham, Mrs. Farren the Queen, and Mrs. Bateman Anne. The Cibber version was undoubtedly the one employed inasmuch as the unadulterated Shakespeare tragedy was at that time practically unknown upon the stage. After the downfall of "the bloody boar," Larkin, Bateman, and Miss Morgan disported themselves in *The Dumb Belle.*

The repetition of *The Sea Captain* was advertised as the "Last night of the engagement of Mr. Conner." This, according to our terminology of the day, it simply was not. But theatrical parlance has changed with the years. In 1840 the "last night" of an engagement did not mean the final appearance, for it was understood that the star's benefit remained yet to be done. Yet, even making that allowance, the term was not correct in this case, since the engagement actually had another week to run. If, however, the "re-engagement" could be made to appear to be the result of irresistible popular demand, so much the better. Publicity experts did not all wait till the twentieth century to be born. The benefit came on April 2, and was composed of Knowles' "late play of *Love* or *Nature's Autocrat*" (called in the *Republican* of that date *Nature's Aristocrat*) and *The Promissory Note,* with the orchestra playing the overture to *Zampa,* and Conner telling a Yankee story between them.

As for *Love,* an editorial-advertisement in the *Bulletin* on the morning before its first repetition (April 6) asserts: "This play has been performed in London with more success than any new one within the last five years." Inasmuch as its premiere was in 1839, two years after Knowles' own popular *The Love Chase* and one after *The Lady of Lyons,* this is a pretty strong statement. In his own day James Sheridan Knowles stood in the forefront of his pro-

fession. He was rated by his contemporaries, including many men and women of taste and discrimination, as almost, if not quite, one of the dramatic immortals. I doubt if any other play written for the English and American stages during the first half of the nineteenth century, with the exception of *The Lady of Lyons* and *Richelieu,* both by Bulwer, could approach *The Hunchback* and *Virginius* in popularity. To-day, taste having changed (we hope for the better), both plays are as the snows of yester-year. It took them decades to disappear; but *Love* was gone long before. So the "puff" in the friendly paper may be taken as just that and no more, even if it was not actually a blurb straight from the managerial office. *Love* fully deserves its fate.

The play is written, like the author's other works, partly in blank verse and partly in prose (for servants, for example). But, whether in verse or prose, the dialogue is characterized by artificiality, pomposity, and sentimentality. *Anonymous* did not like it, and he said so. "It falls," he wrote in the *Gazette* of April 3, "immeasurably short of Knowles' former productions. The only two *parts* are the Countess and Catherine. Huon is nothing, if you take away his scene in the fourth Act—not even a respectable walking gentleman. CONNER made as much of him as could any body else, but it was nothing then. The lines that were written for him were poetry, and he did not mar them by delivery. I cannot say as much for some of the characters. Whether the author made their lines as poetical as he did those of Huon, I cannot say—but this I *can* say, they did not bear the least semblance to poetry—Why, the lines didn't even *jingle.* Fie, gentlemen! learn your *parts* better—if they are *sticks.* MRS. FARREN played excellently well—in fact, her acting was the only redeeming point in the piece. MRS. BATEMAN, though supporting a character not exactly suited to her powers, played it well—perhaps better than could any other person in the present company. One thing—it was a strange want of thought in her wearing mustachoes in the fifth act—don't you think so?"

In defence of Sidney Bateman it should be said that Catherine amuses herself by posing as a boy, and, as is the way with such young females in dramatic literature, succeeds in "putting it over" on her most intimate friends. Doubtless, Mrs. Bateman thought

that mustaches would help the cause. At which gentlemen *Anonymous's* reproaches were aimed, we are not informed, but we can guess.

Conner continued to win golden opinions. The unidentified correspondent of the *Bulletin* of April 4 gives us the following account of his histrionic prowess.

> Our theatre-going friends appear to have been highly gratified at the re-engagement of Mr. Conner. Since his appearance among us he has made himself a universal favorite; and we have heard several remark, that they liked him as well as Forrest. He is a young actor of fine genius—and if he perseveres, and studies as he ought, we predict for him a brilliant career in his profession. Young men are sometimes spoiled by too much flattery; but we think that Mr. Conner will regard commendation as a further incentive to honorable ambition, and not the summons to idleness, indolence, and luxurious ease.
>
> His person is tall and commanding—his movements graceful, and his conception of character just and accurate. His genius is decidedly the physical man; but, he never tears a passion into tatters—and intellect is always predominant.
>
> We have seen him in several characters, in all of which he has acted in the first style. As Angelo, in Tortesa; as Norman, in the Sea Captain; as Cardinal, in Richelieu; and as Huon the Serf, in Love, he has no superior.

The day before this encomium had been spread upon the pages of the *Bulletin,* the management had "had the pleasure of announcing a re-engagement for a few nights of Mr. Conner. Also, for a few nights Mr. and Mrs. J. Greene, of New York and Philadelphia theatres."

These Greenes were an interesting pair and, although now forgotten, were for many years well-known figures on the stages of various American cities, large and small. Both were Americans, the husband having been born, according to Phelps, in Philadelphia in 1795, the wife in Boston five years later.[42] Being of Irish parentage, he was, like Larkin, an adept at the interpretation of Hibernian characters. Phelps quotes Durang's rather startling description: "Greene's personal aspect bore a strange contrast to his disposition. His figure was dwarfish, stout about the shoulders, the breast of

[42] *Ibid.*, 146.

Hercules; the muscle in the torso was remarkable. His head was very large; the face marked with iron sternness. When the lady who became his wife was first introduced to him, she was so struck with his inhuman expression, that she habitually shunned him; but his suavity of manner and conversational powers, with his good humor and merry ways, soon won her affection."[42] She evidently recovered from the initial shock, for she was his wife and constant companion for over forty years. Ludlow reports that his "Irish characters of a low order were uncommonly true to nature."[43]

Phelps continues: "She was, for many years, attached to the Chestnut street theatre, Philadelphia, and after passing through nearly every city in the Union, finally settled at Nashville, where her husband was manager for several seasons. . . . A metropolitan critic says of her: 'She possessed no great diversity of talent, but in the highest range of walking ladies, the serious mothers, the distressed wives and stately baronesses of the stage, we have never seen her surpassed. . . . In personal appearance, she was tall and commanding, and her costume was generally elegant and appropriate. Mrs. Greene has been well known at our minor theatres, where she has often moved like a goddess among the mortals that surrounded her.' "[44]

Of such stuff was the couple who now, for the time-being added their combined strength to the Ludlow and Smith entourage, including the popular Mr. Conner. She participated in eight bills, he in six. She appeared opposite Conner in *The Stranger* (during the course of which Miss Morgan sang "I have a Silent Sorrow"), *La Tour de Nesle, Love* (twice), *Coriolanus* (as Volumnia to the Coriolanus of Conner, the Tullius Aufidius of Bateman, and the Menenius of Farren), Knowles' *The Wrecker's Daughter, The Lady of Lyons* (as the Widow Melnotte), and *The Love Chase* (as the Widow Green). It will be seen that not in every instance did

[42] *Ibid.*, 147. Charles Durang: *The Philadelphia Stage. From the Year 1749 to the Year 1855.*

[43] Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 287.

[44] Phelps: *Players of a Century*, 147. The "metropolitan critic" is Joseph N. Ireland: *Records of the New York Stage*. Dr. Wilson in the "Player List" in his *History of the Philadelphia Theatre, 1835-1855* lists her as a member of the Chestnut Street company only in 1846. Before that she had played at the Walnut and the Arch.

she displace Mrs. Farren, not even in *Love,* in which the haughty Countess would seem to have been more appropriate to her personality than the kittenish Catherine.

A critic, expressing his views in the *Pennant* of April 3, says of Mrs. Greene: "There is a peculiar dignity and elegance in her style of acting which but few possess; and adding to this a full and rich voice, with correct reading, we are confident that all must admire her. We remember to have seen Mrs. G. some years since, and we acknowledge ourselves somewhat surprised to find her now looking as young, and playing with the same spirit as in the pride of her sunny youth." I wonder just how thoroughly she enjoyed reading this last sentence.

Only once did "Mrs. G." invade the realm of farce; that was on April 8 when she played opposite Ludlow in *The Day after the Wedding.* Her spouse, however, laid his hand to a variety of tasks. His forte being Irish comedy—he was sometimes called "the American Power"—he played Mentoch Debany in *The Irishman in London,* O'Shocknessy in the *£100 Note,* and Teague in *Honest Thieves.* In *The Love Chase* he turned himself into an Englishman, Sir William Fondlove, and in *La Tour de Nesle* and *The Wrecker's Daughter* he strayed as Landry and Wolfe respectively even further afield. In *The Poor Soldier* he was Father Luke.

One might expect, as Ludlow probably did, that with attractions like these in addition to Conner, business would be brisk on Third and Olive. It started out well enough, but encountered opposition from the weather. On April 11, *Anonymous* once more proclaimed his opinions through the columns of the *Gazette:*

ST. LOUIS THEATRE.—This splendid 'Temple of Thespis,' I am happy to say, has been nightly filled by large and fashionable audiences. This is right—just as it should be. Such gentlemen as Messrs Ludlow and Smith, are not only an honor to their profession, but to the city, and their merits, both as private citizens, and public contributors to the amusement of the good people of this town, should not, and I am confident *will not* go unrewarded.

He goes on to say that Bateman is ill and that in his absence the part of Beauseant in *The Lady of Lyons* was filled by Mr. Wright. Concerning this man I have little definite information, if indeed any

at all. Ludlow notes that a James A. Wright was a member of the company in 1845-46 and refers to him occasionally thereafter, but he never does more than give his name.[45] Smith lists Mr. and Mrs. James Wright among the members of the company in 1841.[46] In the firm's Letter Book, under date of August 31, 1842, I find a baffling summary of a communication addressed to James L.—or perhaps S.—Wright. It is not particularly enlightening, but it does have its points, and I copy it here. "Wrote to him at Fort Leavenworth in answer to his offered him $ E P for him and wife here St. Louis and $ p.p. for them in South—or $ p x if Mrs. W. should prior to the end of the engt be unfit for young girls and him
breeches characters—divided as follows St. Louis $ R X and
her him
R P in the South $ R B and $ R C deduction from her it will be—" No doubt this was as clear as daylight to those who knew the code, but it does leave even the uninitiated a little wiser in the matter of casting in the 1840's than before. We have here what was evidently the contemporary type of insurance against what is known today as an "act of God." Still we do not know if this was the same Wright.

But back, briefly, to our friend *Anonymous*. Once more he registered his displeasure. He considered *The Conquering Game* (which seems to have served as the afterpiece on both the ninth and the tenth) a slander on Charles XII, even if Conner did play the part. "The Puppy was decidedly the best part of it."[47]

I said above that while during the first part of the Conner engagement business was brisk, the good fortune was short-lived. On April 9 the *Republican* observed: "The Theatre for a few evenings past has been rather thinly attended. The evenings have been so cold as to render it very uncomfortable without fire, and the managers cannot expect persons to attend, particularly ladies, unless they can be made comfortable."

[45]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 640.

[46]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 156.

[47]According to the *Autobiography of Clara Fisher Maeder*, this farce was an adaptation from her pen of Bernard's *La Jeunesse de Charles XII*.

Saturday, April 11, saw the close of the worthy engagement just discussed. His wife and Conner having had their benefits (the latter's second, of course), Greene took his in *The Love Chase* and *The Poor Soldier*. I have already noted that in the former he played Sir William Fondlove; Conner was the Wildrake, Mrs. Greene the Widow Green, and Mrs. Farren the Constance. In the operetta, there being, properly enough, no reason why she should not, Miss Morgan donned a pair of breeches and disported herself as Patrick, Greene being Father Luke, Mrs. Bateman Norah, and Mrs. Russell Kathleen. Already advertisements were up proclaiming the glories ahead, and, for the time-being, the "legitimate" retired to a modest position in the background.

III

FOUR MUSES

Spring of 1840

In their zeal to keep their heads, both personal and professional, above water, Messrs. Ludlow and Smith enlisted before this spring season came to a summer close the services of four of the nine ladies reputed by legend to make their collective home on the slopes of Mount Parnassus. If the charms of one were not sufficient to lure the hesitant St. Louisans from their *lares* and *penates,* perhaps another might exert a more potent lure. At any rate, the managers were determined to try. So down from their mountain home, one after the other, they came, Terpsichore, Thalia, Melpomene, and Euterpe. I think it may be said that they all did their best.

First the citizens were treated to what might be termed "a Terpsichorean interlude." For the next two weeks the Theatre was dedicated to the art of the dance with brief comedies and farces thrown in for good measure. But the centre of attraction was not the acrobatic and versatile Ravels upon which combination Smith had pinned so many hopes. They had actually started to St. Louis to fill this engagement, but on April 1 the *Republican* conveyed the dismal tidings that the steamboat *Selma* on which they were making the journey had gone down the week before at the head of Island Number 66, and they had "lost a considerable portion of their baggage, etc. They went on to Louisville to refit."

Earlier in the year Sol had exchanged several letters with Monsieur Le Compte, husband, associate, and manager of one of the most eminent danseuses of the day. This gentleman had been very anxious to open in St. Louis on April 1, but permission had been refused him unless he could induce the Ravels to exchange dates. This, apparently, they had declined to do, and Madame had had to wait until the thirteenth. Monsieur had seen the Ravels do their acts and he, palpably, had not been impressed. Writing to Smith from New Orleans on March 2, he averred that "their performances are of a funny, gay low comic and laffable sort (*though very cleaver*) ours is of a more classical serious kind." In the same letter Le

Compte stated his terms and named the personnel of his corps. "That there may be no mistake my company is composed of: Madam Lecompte and myself, M. Martin, Melle Desjardins, Mons. Kaiffer, and Mme. Martin.[1] . . . I shall only perform *Masaniello* and in case of indisposition the unknown if you prefer it."[2] His terms were: twelve performances, including three benefits. He and the firm were to share the receipts after the deduction of $150 for expenses; he was to get a clear half of the return of each benefit. These terms apparently were accepted.

But it was not only dancers who gave Sol a headache. He also had his scene-painter, a very necessary adjunct in any season and especially in one involving elaborate effects which made demands that could not be met by drawing, as in the case of most plays, upon the standard flats stored away backstage or wherever they were kept. The managers had had trouble in that department before. They had had when they first opened their theatre in 1837, a good man named John R. Smith, but for some reason had parted company with him. They had then considered themselves fortunate in securing the services of "Young Joe" Cowell, but they had discharged him at the close of the preceding season. Cause: indolence. Now, it seems they had a Charlie Smith. But he was in New Orleans, whereas they needed him in St. Louis. On the last day of March Sol wrote his partner a long letter full of facts and figures. "It seems impossible to get Smith off—I have tried & tried—he *promised* to go to-day—but at the last moment failed—he wanted to collect some money & his wife hadn't got her clothes from the wash! He says beyond a doubt he will go to-morrow—& says if he can get there only *two days* before 'La Bayadere' he will have it ready—If he goes, I advise you to put him on some new piece, to get ready for the last of May, provided there is no Star to follow the Barnes' & Sinclair—& plan it out with Smith *yourself*—(without *any* new canvas)—for if you leave it to Farren, he will piddle along for a month, & do nothing at last."

Eventually the obstacles were overcome, and the dancers accomplished their debuts on April 13 in the "Ballet Pantomime by

[1]Martin was Mme. Le Compte's brother (Odell: *Annals*, IV, 286).
[2]"The Unknown" is a character in *La Bayadère*.

Scribe and Taglioni in two acts, called La Sylphide—with new scenery, dresses, and decorations."[8] Madame Le Compte herself was seen in the title role, with Mademoiselle Desjardins as Effie, Madame Martin as Anne Reuben, Monsieur Kaiffer as Gurn, Monsieur Nerraf as Old Madge, and the Corps de Ballet as Sylphides and Peasants. It was preceded by a curtain raiser, *The Green Eyed Monster* with Cowell and Mrs. Farren. The only local papers to show any interest in the dancers were the *Gazette* and the *Pennant*. "There was," reported the former on April 14, " 'skip, hop, and jump,' as a Yankee would say, at the theatre, last night. Madame Le Compte and Mons. Kaiffer's dancing delighted the house; but the piece was neither relished nor comprehended." The next day the same paper spoke in eulogistic terms of the performance of the *prima ballerina*. On the twenty-first it announced that the theatre had been "crammed" the night before. "Just after the opening not a spare seat could be found in the parquette or first tier of boxes; and in a short time the second tier was well filled. The performances were varied, and the interest was sustained to a late hour. It was fun alive to witness 'Marco Bomba.' The 'barber' and the 'recruiting sergeant' were done to the life—Mons. Kaiffer is a very versatile actor; and from his nimbleness one would suppose he was 'hung on wires.' "

Monsier Kaiffer was obviously a favorite, for the same paper reported on April 23 that he had delighted the audience at a repetition of *Marco Bomba* on the twentieth. "Such postures, attitudes, movements, grimaces and versatile changes of countenance are seldom witnessed. There has not been so much fun, riotous uproars of laughter and universal side-shaking at any exhibition, as there was at the first production of this *extravaganza burletta*, since Dan Marble took the roof off."

Twenty-eight years after these events took place there appeared in the *St. Louis Home Journal* what might be termed in the language of today a "tabloid history" of the St. Louis stage. The author, who at first chose to be anonymous, stating merely that his articles were "written on basis of advice from Sol Smith," in the March 21 issue of the paper revealed himself to be "Charles

[8] *Missouri Republican*, April 13, 1840

Spooner, dramatic editor." In the series the part played by Ludlow is most unfairly "played down," a fact which the old man not unnaturally resented. Not all of Spooner's history is accurate, but most of it is and he does give, whether via Sol's memories or his own, some pertinent information about this engagement.

. . . Madame Lecompte was undoubtedly a *danseuse* of great merit, but with a tendency to *embonpoint* which in her younger days but added an additional charm to the voluptuous style of her dancing. But as she did not quit the stage until comparatively aged, the remembrances of her are of a body who danced gracefully in spite of an unwieldly bulk comparable to nothing but Alboni.[4] The young and beautiful M'lle Desjardins, of the troupe, was an immense favorite, and though in the ballet of 'La Bayadere,' much applause was showered upon the portly *impresaria,* it was evident that the youthful Fatima had the hearts of the spectators. This beautiful ballet was repeated many times; the shawl dance and trial dance being particularly applauded. In the masked ball of 'Gustavus,' humorous waltzes, polkas, galops, and mazurkas were introduced which created quite a furore. The 'Bragging Sergeant, Marco Bomba,' was also one of their pieces, but perhaps the greatest favorite was 'La Sylphide,' in which Des Jardins danced the *pas Styrien,* and Le Compte the Cachucha.[5]

This is interesting and revealing, but even better are the reviews written on the spot by an unnamed correspondent of the *Pennant* who displayed a really surprising musical awareness. I have come across in no St. Louis paper critiques of quite the same character and so shall draw on them rather liberally. The first, in the issue of April 25, deals with the first performance (on April 21) of *La Bayadere,* an operatic ballet by Scribe and Auber.

. . . By the way, the original Hautboy solo in E flat, which occurs in the course of the Ballet, was very injudiciously given to the horn—the clarionet or violin would have done much better. . . .

Mr. Farren *acted* very well, but of his singing "least said," &c. Mr. Larkin deserves all credit for his industry in learning and singing a difficult piece of music as well as he did, though in my humble opinion the part was not as well adapted to his voice as might be. I should advise him in another representation to sing his first solo "Breathes there a heart" which he sang in B flat (as it is originally

[4]Marietta Alboni (1823-1894), an Italian opera singer.

[5]*The St. Louis Home Journal,* February 23, 1868.

written, I believe) half a note lower (in A) so as not to be compelled to run into falsetto. As it is, it is too high for his voice and an infliction on the audience. In that beautiful trio "Oh what means that stranger" he did not count his time quite correct, though it was throughout too fast. These hints are at his service from a friend who would be glad to see him make use of them. Miss Morgan in the part of Ninka, pleasingly surprised and exceeded all expectations. Although not having a brilliant voice, she knew and sang every note in her part and the solo in the second act "Near the cottagers door," was among the best things lately heard on this stage. Her industry and very correct singing must insure her success, as indeed she was the only one of the stock company, who seemed really acquainted with the music throughout. The closing scene is really beautiful and reflects much credit on the scene painter and machinist.—Hoping that the next representation will draw a full house—
C SHARP IN THE CORNER.

From this same review we learn that Smith's friend Woolf was the conductor and that he hurried the orchestra. "I am really sorry to see an opera got up by our enterprising managers in as good a style as this was, not drawing better houses." To supplement this last hint, the *Pennant* of April 28 contributed this bit: "Doings at the Police Office/Monday morning, April 27th [Saturday night]. As our readers may remember, it was *rather* rainy, or so, during the evening; and about the time that Madame Le Comte was turning her last pirouette to about two dozen subeditors and printer's devils," etc. Enough said!

But there is better yet to come from this same outspoken and useful journal. The following is taken from the issue of April 29.

REPORT
OF THE INVISIBLE AGENTS OF THE
Council of Three
unto whose eyes the good and evil occurrences
of this life are made manifest

. . . . Mr. Farren did enact "Olifours" and much as we admire that gentleman for possessing talents of a superior order as an actor, yet we are bound to infer from the manner in which he *executed* the music allotted to him, that he will never become a great singer. Fearing that he was laboring under a severe cold, or that the surfice [*sic*] of his tympanum might have contained some obstruction,

we dispatched two of our diminutive familiars, each armed with a pickaxe and spade, for the purpose of removing any obstacle from that sensitive organ, but they returned without making any discovery. It was also remarked of him that while singing the delightful cavatina entitled "Charming Bayadere" instead of addressing vows of love to the "peerless Le Comte," his eyes were riveted upon the face of the leader; now this conduct was most ungallant towards the lady, and it gave us an opportunity of drawing a comparison any other than flattering to the said leader, who to our opinion is totally unqualified by personal appearance for the representation of a charming Bayadere. We also observed during the performance of this cavatina, that the countenance of the leader expressed a variety of contortions; but whether this was caused by the exquisite strains of the vocalist, or the mischievous propensity of a familiar whom we observed tickling his nose with a straw we cannot determine. . . .

Mr. Larkin personified "the Unknown" and sang the difficult music allotted unto him with much taste and skill; but we must here address a few words of admonition, the which, it may be presumed, may not be unprofitable to him. That Mr. Larkin is an excellent musician cannot be denied; and that he hath become a favorite with our citizens we do confess; yet notwithstanding these advantages in his favor, we do condemn the taste wherewith he was actuated to appear upon the stage in a slovenly dress. . . . We do advise him to hold us in fear, and be more than usually circumspect: nor would it disgrace his dignity to devote a dollar or two from the salary which he is receiving for the purpose of renovating the heels of the *Immortal Boots,* wherewith his awful feet were encased: we do also hint to him that *"yellow ochre"* is not unplentiful within this city.

Miss Morgan sang her music with one or two exceptions to our satisfaction. We do take this opportunity of expressing our disapprobation against a practice which we have more than once observed of certain vocalists, who being in error during the performance of a concerted piece of music, have endeavored by a sinister expression of countenance, to make others appear at fault; such conduct is most unbecoming; and let those parties rest assured that on its repetition their names will appear attached to a decree of our Council, and accompanied by certain remarks from our Pundit, who is deeply versed in the mysteries of detecting those rancorous and malignant feelings, too often cherished within the heart. . . .

The historian of 1868 asserts that the French company created a sensation. But, as we have seen, contemporary newspaper items do not report sensational business. On the contrary, on April 25, the

Republican said: "Last evening the theatre was rather thinly attended, considering the immense attraction presented. Mme. Le Comte, Mlle. Des Jardins, M. Kieffer [*sic*] & Martin certainly deserved good houses. . . ." When we find reports of crammed houses, it is always well to remember that the blurb—then known as the "puff"—was not unknown in "the Fabulous Forties."

On April 27 Madame took her farewell benefit with *La Sylphide, The Masked Ball,* and *Marco Bomba,* the members of the company contributing *Nature and Philosophy* and *The Rival Soldiers.* (Incidentally it might be fair to say that during this engagement the regular stock actors had been only less busy than usual, since each bill contained at least one farce or operetta, generally as a curtain raiser.) Miss Morgan offered a song, "Meet me in the Willow Glen," and Miss Stanard, "A Broad Sword Hornpipe," whatever that was. And that program marked the conclusion of the Terpsichorean interlude.

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"Messrs. Editors. I understand that Mr. CHARLES H. EATON—of whom Forrest said, several years ago, 'If that young man is not spoiled, he will make the greatest tragedian in the United States,'—is in town. If at all consistent with Mr. Ludlow's other arrangements, I know that a short engagement with Mr. Eaton would afford the highest gratification to many in this city, and would, I have no doubt, fill the house. Why could not he and Madame Le Comte play on alternate nights? We should see, then, the exact estimation in which the legitimate is held." And so on.

This in the *Bulletin* of April 17.

It spoke not alone. The next day, both the *Republican* (in the morning) and the *Gazette* (in the evening) voiced the same hope, and in not dissimilar strains. I suspect that the tragedian made the rounds of the newspaper offices and "waited on" the friendly journalists. But he did not stop at that. He wrote a poem—a very bad poem—which, on the twenty-first, the good-natured editor of the *Republican* inflicted on his readers. I suspect, however, that many of them thought it pretty good. Our forebears' tastes in poetry are often hard to explain.

While no arrangement was made for the young man to alternate nightly with the plump ballerina, Ludlow did find it possible to give him a few evenings, and St. Louis audiences had the desired opportunity to show "the exact estimation in which the legitimate" was held. They showed it. That Charles Henry Eaton was a gifted actor there can be no doubt, whether or not the mighty Forrest ever gave voice to the encomium ascribed to him; Forrest being Forrest, it seems very unlikely that he did. If Allston Brown is right in giving the date of his birth as June 10, 1813, he was at the time of his St. Louis debut not quite twenty-seven years of age.[6] He had been on the stage nearly ten years, and had from the first, it seems, played leading roles. So highly was he regarded by Wm. W. Clapp, Jr., that the latter devoted pages of his *Record of the Boston Stage* to a eulogy. For our purposes a quotation will suffice.

He was a decidedly handsome man; his head and face being strikingly intellectual. The features were what is understood as classical; a long, straight, Grecian nose, facial oval contour, chin rather long and rounded, a mouth made beautiful by a finely curved upper lip, combined with a clear, light, healthy complexion, will convey some idea of his pleasing exterior; his dark hazel eyes were full, large, and expressive, while a profusion of auburn hair, slightly curling, adorned his manly brow. Charles H. Eaton was not a large man, being but five feet, six and a half inches in height; but he was very far from diminutive; his full, ample chest, the stately carriage of his head, and the great muscular development of his well-rounded limbs made him seem above the average size, though not *"ex pede Herculeum,"* in grace and dignity of mien he moved an Apollo. . . . With all the physical essentials of face, form, voice, and natural grace, he was enabled, thus richly endowed, to convey fully and forcibly his minutely accurate and scholarly conceptions. His performances all bore an intellectual impress. As a reader of Shakespeare he was unsurpassed.[7]

Such was the paragon who now burst upon St. Louis. Clapp may quite possibly have been carried away by his enthusiasm, but all accounts agree that Eaton was no run-of-the-mill play-actor. It is all the more regrettable, then, that with so much to commend him and so great a career before him, he should have allowed himself

[6]Brown: *American Stage.*

[7]Wm. W. Clapp, Jr.: *A Record of the Boston Stage,* 309, ff.

to become the victim of an intemperance which ended his career in mid-flight and left him little more than a cipher in history.

The historian who wrote in the *St. Louis Home Journal* in 1868 erred when he stated that Eaton was "first engaged for two nights only," but proved to be so popular that he played off and on for three weeks. During this season the tragedian appeared only four times, on the last three evenings of April and on May 2. His parts were Richard III, Sir Giles Overreach in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts,* Hamlet, and Sir Edward Mortimer in *The Iron Chest.*

The *Pennant* of April 30 is the vehicle for a critique of Eaton's opening performance which has something very like the aspect of a "puff."

It [Eaton's acting] differs materially from that of any other actor on the American stage. It is what may truly be termed the *intellectual* style. Apparently violating all established rules, and sweeping open the chords of the heart with wild and terrific energy, or waking with dulcet breathing the gentle harmonies of love, you are hurried away by the supernatural energy of the *mind* which thus sways your soul, as the invisible spirit of Heaven heaves the tides of the ocean. The man and the stage are lost sight of—so complete is his art that you only see a grand simplicity in all he does. He has that rare and beautiful power of exaggerating *all the parts* of a performance without destroying the original contrasts and symmetry of nature.

This does not to-day appear to describe what we regard as "intellectual art" any more than it impresses us as intelligent criticism, but it is not altogether unrevealing. *Anonymous* writing in the *Gazette* (April 29) makes it clear that he was not so completely swept off his feet that he could lose sight of the man and the stage. "This gentleman was greeted last night by a crowded and fashionable audience to witness his representation of 'Richard the Third.'—Being aware that expectation was raised very high in regard to him, and the rapturous welcome which he received from a host of friends, threw him off his guard in the first scene, and he did not fully recover himself during the Act. His second and fifth Acts were very fine. In consequence of not having played for some length of time, his voice, for want of exercise, gave way. 'You'll find him quite a different man in the field to-night.'" In closing, the critic adds,

" 'Might I advise' I would say to him, play more in front of the stage, and save your strength for the last act, and you will make an impression which will never be erased." Can this mean that the star was yelling? On May 2 the *Gazette* observed that his voice was "much improved."

On his other performances no one bothered to comment; or, perhaps, the papers could not spare the space. But we learn from the advertisements something of the casts which surrounded him. Of course Mrs. Farren (who had been the Queen in *Richard III*) continued to play the female leads. In *Hamlet* her mother played the Queen, and her husband Polonius, with Cowell as the Grave Digger (I presume the First). On his last night Cowell played Sampson, Mrs. Farren Blanche, and a "Mr. Dolman" Wilford in *The Iron Chest*. Of the last-named the advertisements say only, "his 1st appearance, who has volunteered for the occasion." His identity is not revealed; nor is the *City Directory* for 1840 of any assistance.[8]

But Eaton was not content to act the great roles of tragedy; he had a side-line, as it were. He gave imitations of his contemporaries, a form of theatrical entertainment which had (and still has) its admirers. These he offered on his opening night after he had died as Richard on Bosworth Field, and the subjects were Forrest, the Elder Booth, Kean (presumably Edmund), and Vandenhoff. The writer in the *Home Journal* (February 23, 1868) says, "His imitation of the elder Booth is said to have been very fine." Fine he may have been, though I fear but little to his material profit, for on May 2 a gentleman who signed himself modestly "A FRIEND OF REAL MERIT" remarked in the *Pennant* after a glowing panegyric, ". . . . while Forrest and others of the great guns receive their one hundred dollars per night, he has as yet made but about *seventy* dollars for his three nights' arduous and almost unparalleled exertions." Whether or not, his benefit rectified this "injustice," Eaton thereupon disappeared from the local scene, not to return until several months had passed.

* * *

[8]Professor John Dolman, Jr., makes the following suggestion: "The most likely person seems to be John Hickman Dolman, born 1821, an active person of many interests, who went to Texas sometime about 1840, but moved about a good deal. In 1844 he settled in St. Louis, but may well have been there before."

The theatre-going public having been entertained with the dance seasoned with a taste of tragedy, Ludlow, a firm believer in variety, now proffered for its delectation several important songsters. On April 28 a trio of musical celebrities arrived by steamboat from New Orleans.[9] They were Madame Otto, a singer who had for some years been active in New York; John Sinclair, a Scotch tenor and the father of Mrs. Edwin Forrest; and William Brough, a well-known basso. According to the *Bulletin,* "We can truly say, that we have caught a flock of *genuine* nightingales."

It would probably not be inaccurate to say that the "nightingales" were quite ready to be caught. They came to St. Louis quite eager to be captured, provided always that the terms were satisfactory. Only one of the three had a contract in his pocket. This was Sinclair, who had been conducting epistolatory negotiations with Smith. On March 21 the latter had written his partner that he had refused to pay the tenor twenty-five per cent, but had offered to divide after $200" and give him half the proceeds of a benefit. "At length he agrees to submit to the deduction of $100 each night, & then take 25 per cent on the balance—with ½ Benefit." There had been some bargaining in the field of art.

Sol had also dickered with the other two. In his letter of March 31 he wrote Ludlow: "I send them over a written engt. to Brough & Mad. Otto, offering to give them *2 thirds of half after $200,* for nine nights, & half of two Benefits—they singing for Sinclair's Benefit, & he for theirs—provided we make the arrangement with Sinclair to sing with them—I also (much against my will, but as nearly as I can learn you authorized Foster to close with them on these terms,) make the condition that if we do not engage Sinclair to perform with them, the *two* shall share after $200 & 2 half Benefits—8 nights in all—I think you told Foster 10, but I think the fewer the better for us.—You will understand that if I do not engage Sinclair before he leaves Orleans, (& I don't suppose I shall—to perform with *them*—after his own engagement) it will remain for you to do it—& the terms are to be *one* third of half after $200 for 9 nights, & he sing for their two Benefits, and they for [letter torn]—king in amount dividing with the 3 after $200 & 3 half Benefits. If Brough does not now close, he may go to—Sol Smith."

[9] *The Daily Bulletin,* April 29, 1840.

If Ludlow's head did not ache when he finished the perusal of this epistle, he was a mathematician or else was, as was doubtless the case, inured by custom to such calculations. The reader is subjected to them in order that he may have a glimpse of the machinery working behind the scenes. Just how these particular negotiations worked out I cannot say. The results probably were not precisely what Smith had planned, but it is not unlikely that he was satisfied. Sinclair sang six times, and for no one's benefit but his own. Brough was "induced" to make a single appearance, on Miss Morgan's night. Madame Otto evidently would not come to terms with the resident manager, and contented herself with singing in joint concerts with Brough, one of which had to be postponed because the basso had a sore throat.[10]

Sinclair's first bow was made as Henry Bertram in an operatic version of Scott's *Guy Mannering* on May 1. In the course of the evening he sang four solos and a duet with Miss Morgan, who was cast as Julia Mannering. Mrs. Farren must have applied considerable make-up to her youthful features if she was at all convincing as Meg Merrilies; Mrs. Bateman was more appropriately cast as Lucy Bertram, and Cowell found scope for his talents in the part of Dominie Sampson. There is extant no review of this performance or of any other though the *Pennant* did print a few comments on May 13. The writer expressed regret that Sinclair "should have attracted no more attention in St. Louis. . . . Whatever he undertakes, is sure to be done *well*. There is no suspense in the mind of the auditor—no fear of failure." But the critic did deplore his reliance on "falsetto notes, which it seems to us rather bad taste for him now to dwell upon. We could wish to hear his sostenutos and rolades all made within the temperament of his voice." The contributions of Larkin were approved of, but he is designated as a bass, whereas Ludlow calls him a "tenor singer." The most instructive part of this critique, however, is not concerned with any soloist.

Of the chorusses &c &c we have nothing very favorable to say. It must evidently be impossible to get up operas at so short notice, and with a company of green hands, who generally know nothing of music; and the only wonder is that, under the circumstances, it went off as well as it did.

[10] *The Daily Evening Gazette*, May 7, 1840.

Of Sinclair himself, Ludlow tells us something. After stating that Ireland gives 1790 as the date of the tenor's birth, which would make him fifty in 1840, he goes on to say that, when he died in 1857, the papers gave his age as seventy-five. "In my opinion, the newspapers were nearest the truth. When Mr. Sinclair performed in my theatre in St. Louis, in either 1840 or 1841, he appeared to be a man of at least sixty years of age. His voice was husky and some notes cracked, and voice and face indicated a man of sixty years of age. Notwithstanding, his Scotch ballads and other songs were still delightful."[11] Ludlow also says that he was one of the most successful stars of the season; yet he is not sure of which season.

On May 4, after a revival of the ever-popular spectacle of *The Ice Witch,* Sinclair took part in two pieces: *The Spirit of the Clyde,* in which as Kenneth he introduced "those two songs so rapturously encored on Friday last, 'Spring time of year is coming,' and 'Come sit thee down' "; and *No!* or *The Glorious Minority,* in which he delivered more solos.[12] The *Republican* of May 8, announcing his assumption of another Scott role, Francis Osbaldistone in *Rob Roy,* speaks of this as his fourth appearance. There must have been one, therefore, on the sixth, a day on which, for some reason, no paper was published. Despite his age, he patently had strength enough for a full evening's labors, since after *Rob Roy,* in which he sang several numbers, he went through the opera *Rosina.* On both the eleventh and the thirteenth he sang the title-role in *Masaniello,* on the latter occasion, his benefit, adding a repetition of *The Spirit of the Clyde* and some miscellaneous songs. There was life in the old boy yet.

Brough, who was only forty-two, made his sole appearance as Squire Hawthorne in Bickerstaffe's old ballad opera, *Love in a Village,* in which he sang five songs, and in the afterpiece, *No Song, No Supper,* with two more solos. According to the *Republican* (May 18), his voice was a "Baritone Bass of the finest order, and his style pure, and although florid, is a compound of the English; he gave great satisfaction to all capable of judging with critical acumen. As an actor he is far superior to any mere singer we have seen or heard."

[11]Ludlow, *Dramatic Life,* 522.
[12]*Daily Bulletin,* May 4, 1840.

Before the "nightingales" had warbled their final notes, the next stars arrived in town. These were the Barnes family—Mr. and Mrs. John Barnes and their daughter Charlotte (later Mrs. E. S. Conner). The parents had come to this country a quarter of a century before, and Mrs. Barnes, after her debut at the Park Theatre in New York, had been pronounced "decidedly the best Juliet on the American stage," and achieved a position of real importance in the East.[13] Barnes himself was a favorite comedian. During his first season a critical reviewer made this estimate of his worth: "he has no great variety in his action, and little nicety of discrimination. He has a *knack* at raising a laugh, and is content to practice the same trick as long as it will answer the same end."[14] He raised many laughs throughout the ensuing quarter of a century, during which both he and his wife were great favorites at the Park—and elsewhere as well. By 1840, however, their powers and their attraction had begun to weaken, and they were looking to their daughter to carry the family torch. Dr. Odell refers to her as "Charlotte . . . whom her father had tried so hard to make by art what her mother was by nature—a fine tragic actress."[15]

The Barneses were friends of Smith. I judge for that reason they were not, at least in retrospect, friends of Ludlow. The violent quarrel between the two managers not yet having taken place, he may have entertained no hard feelings at the time, but when he set about writing his recollections, he used this pleasant family as one of many sticks wherewith to beat the memory of his dead partner.

Referring to Smith's after-season in Mobile, Ludlow asserts that he was opposed to it, but that Smith desired it in order to accommodate his friends. "Now, the reader should understand that Mr. Barnes and family—Mrs. and Miss Charlotte Barnes—were not among the regular stars engaged by us prior to the commencement of the season, but they had wandered out to the South, to return to New York by the West, depending upon such chances as they could get to play in the cities and towns that lay in the way of their route. Their main object was to give their daughter, then preparing to make a start in the profession, as much practice as

[13]Odell: *Annals*, II, 453.
[14]*Ibid.*, II, 477.
[15]*Ibid.*, IV, 303.

possible before making a grand attempt in the cities of the East." He goes on to say that Smith "had made the acquaintance of Mr. Barnes while he was in New York, during the summer of 1835, and felt flattered that 'Old Jack' should condescend so much as to perform in any theatre under his management."[16]

This passage is a pretty fair sample of the kind of argument with which Ludlow marred his in many ways invaluable book in order to besmirch the character of his former colleague. About his own disapproval of the after-season, he may be entirely right. But he is clearly in error when he says that Mr. and Mrs. Barnes were preparing their daughter "to make a start in the profession." Charlotte was at this time twenty-two years old and had been on the stage since childhood, first as a prodigy and more recently as a leading lady. She had made her debut in the latter capacity as Angela in *The Castle Spectre* at no less a theatre than the famous Park six years before. These facts are recorded by Ludlow himself in another chapter of his book, a discrepancy he overlooked in order to make his point.[17] In 1837 her own tragedy, *Octavia Bragaldi,* had been produced at Wallack's National Theatre, also in New York, the authoress herself playing the principal female role, and she had also played the leading business in other dramas in the same house. So, whatever her deficiencies, she could scarcely be dismissed in 1840 as a tyro engaged in learning the ropes before trying out her powers in the East.

Furthermore, only sheer malice can have motivated Ludlow's sneer that Smith was flattered because "Old Jack should condescend" to act under his management. The latter was unquestionably an actor of standing, but I doubt if Ludlow himself would have called him a greater attraction than Ellen Tree, Edwin Forrest, or Dan Marble, all of whom had been glad to appear under Sol's management. Finally, it was not in the least unusual to engage stars almost at the last minute.

It is true that Barnes *père* and *mère* tried to create their daughter in their own image and failed. Unhappily, they had not the cooperation of Nature. Ludlow's unflattering description does not, in the light of other comments, seem to be unfair. "Her face was

[16]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 518.
[17]*Ibid.,* 541.

not what is called a good stage face, at any time of her life. Her voice was unmusical and weak, she was near-sighted, and her eyes lacked expression."[18] The opinion of Phelps agreed with this view. "Although she had pretty features, her face was not adapted to the stage; neither was her voice nor her figure, and, therefore, although educated for the position and possessed of talents of no mean order, she never attained the eminence as an actress, that her many friends hoped for her."[19] These observations are more than confirmed by a glance at the portrait by Neagle which hangs in the Players Club, New York, and is reproduced in Dr. Odell's fourth volume.

This young lady was presented to the St. Louis public by Ludlow, perhaps with reluctance, as Julia in *The Hunchback* on May 5. Her support was excellent. For once, Mrs. Farren resigned her leading position to play the decidedly secondary part of Helen. Farren was the Master Walter, Marsh the Clifford, Cowell the Fathom, and Ludlow the Modus. Afterwards Charlotte was seen as Lady Julia in *Personation*.

Two evenings later the whole family was presented in what should have been a very good performance of *The School for Scandal*. Barnes himself, of course, assumed his great role of Sir Peter with his daughter as Lady Teazle and his wife as Mrs. Candour. Ludlow (whose name, like those of the visitors, was blazoned forth in capitals in the publicity) was the Charles Surface, one of his favorite roles, despite the fact that as a man of practically forty-five, he can scarcely have looked the young rake. Joseph was impersonated by Marsh, Sir Oliver by Farren, Crabtree by Cowell, and Careless, "with a song," by Larkin. Mrs. Farren did not take part, but her mother was in her accustomed place as Lady Sneerwell, and Mrs. Bateman, as might be expected, was the Maria. The comedy was followed by *Family Jars* in which Old Jack displayed himself in another of his prize creations, Delph, with Miss Morgan carolling as Emily. Between the two pieces Mrs. Barnes recited "COLLINS' ODE ON THE PASSIONS . . . accompanied with the original music."

Charlotte's third role was the Countess in *Love*. The afterpiece was *Sprigs of Laurel* with Barnes as Nipperkin, one of Lud-

[18] *Ibid.*, 541.

[19] Phelps: *Players of a Century*, 174.

low's special parts. On May 12 "the more or less fair authoress" (as Dr. Odell calls her) presented herself for her first benefit in her own tragedy, *Octavia Bragaldi,* "Founded on facts which occurred in the city of Frankfort, Ky., in the year 1825."[20] The *Gazette* of the same date asserts that the facts related to "the murder of Col. Sharp, by Beauchamp."[21] This work had already been introduced to New York, but its success had not been excessive. On this occasion it was followed by *The Scape Goat* or *Love versus Learning,* a farce, with the two elder Barneses as Polyglot and Molly Maggs.

Three evenings later, Sinclair and Brough having finished at the Theatre and their friend Sol having arrived in town, the visiting family settled down for a run of six nights, interrupted only by Sunday. On Friday, the fifteenth, the bill was composed of *The Love Chase,* in which all three took part, and *Family Jars.* The next evening brought Barnes' benefit and with it, the first local performance of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors,* the beneficiary and Cowell appearing as the two Dromios, of Syracuse and Ephesus respectively, "the latter in imitation of the former." Charlotte supported her father as Lucinda, and her mother was, according to the *Bulletin,* "Abbis" Then the whole family joined forces in "LAFITTE or the Pirate of the Gulf" with Charlotte as Theodore (a page), Barnes as Marlinspike (a boatswain), and Mrs. Barnes as Constantia. This play was in the words of Dr. Arthur Hobson Quinn an "Alteration of Medina's *La Fitte*" like *Octavia Bragaldi* from the pen of Miss Barnes. Louisa Medina's play had had its premiere in 1836 at the Bowery in New York under the title of *La Fitte* or *The Pirate's Home.* The version presented in St. Louis had had its first performance, under Caldwell, in New Orleans in 1838.[22]

May 17 saw the first local presentation of Mrs. Centlivre's *The Busy Body* in nine years. After that, the young lady enlivened the occasion with *The Captive* or *Scenes in a Mad House,* which Dr. Odell is unkind enough to say reminds him of Miss Snevellici

[20]*Daily Bulletin,* May 12, 1840.

[21]Quinn: *History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War,* 260.

[22]*Ibid.,* 439.

in *Nicholas Nickleby*. But, as an antidote, perhaps to ward off imminent nightmares, her elders repeated *The Scape Goat*.

An anonymous writer in the *Gazette*—not, however, I think, *Anonymous* himself—liked the "show." "The Busy-body went off very finely at the theatre last evening. Old Barnes as Gripe was excellent. Ludlow did up Marplot very amusingly; and shows that it takes a sensible man to play the shallow-pate well. Mrs. Barnes enacted her part as Patch with incredible vivacity. Of her talented and handsome daughter in any part it is difficult to speak, save in terms of praise, though last night, we were not quite so much interested in her personation of Miranda as we have been in most of her other characters. In fact, Miranda has very little to do and affords no room for display. A little less constant pitching of the dress would be more acceptable. Marsh, which is unusual, dressed well, and also, which is unusual, painted too high. But young Russel—who, by the way, acquitted himself very well, presented a face that looked like a painter's sign-board, intended to show how deep he could color." He added that the "audience was thin—but many of them discovered a sense of delicacy at one passage of the play, for which they deserve a leather medal, well turned out of asses' ears."

This last comment is particularly interesting. Was there in the making a wholesome rebellion against the prudishness of the day, a weakness, by the way, from which the managers themselves were not entirely free? I am afraid, however, that this was merely another case of one swallow's not making a summer. The "young Russel" was Dick, brother of Mrs. Farren. Although at times useful, he never achieved any position in the theatre. At this time he was nineteen years old; he died nine years later of tuberculosis.

On May 19 Charlotte Barnes was seen as Letitia Harding in *The Belle's Stratagem*, the cast also including her parents as Mr. Hardy and Mrs. Packet, Ludlow as Doricourt, Cowell as Flutter, and Mrs. Bateman as Lady Francis. Looking at the advertisement in the *Bulletin*, I cannot help speculating on the emotions of Old Joe Cowell when he scanned it and saw his name and his daughter's the only ones in small type. I cannot believe that this distinction "sat well."

For Mrs. Barnes' benefit on the twentieth *The School for Scandal* was repeated with the same cast as before, the afterpiece being *The Two Thompsons* with Barnes as Mr. Thompson, 2nd. An editorial in the *Gazette* pleaded the lady's cause.

THEATRE—MRS. BARNES—that excellent actress, who, like precious metal, wears brighter as she gets older—who is brim-full of vivacity and was always a favorite with play-goers—solicits a benefit to-night. . . .

It is really to be regretted by all the frequenters of the theatre, and shows the pressure of the times, that this highly talented family —with a gem in it like the daughter who unites to handsome natural gifts great advantages of education—should have been so neglected during their stay here.

The next evening witnessed Charlotte's farewell benefit in "First and only time, a new drama called CATHARINE HOWARD Translated from the French by MISS CHARLOTTE BARNES; and performed by her with most decided success."[28] The authoress herself, as would be expected, filled the title role. "Immediately after the play, MR. BARNES by desire, will sing *'Barney leave the girls alone.'* Following which Mrs. BARNES will recite Collins' ODE ON THE PASSIONS with appropriate music." There were on this occasion two afterpieces: *The Promissory Note,* with Ludlow, and *The Two Thompsons,* with Barnes.

And that, so far as St. Louis was concerned, at least for a long time to come, was the last of the Barnses.

* * *

The prospectus published in the *Republican* just as the season by "the established company" was about to get under way, in proclaiming the glories of the Ravels, mentions the fact that they had recently strengthened their company by the addition of "Master and Miss Wells." Later, of course, they all suffered shipwreck on their way to St. Louis and retired to Louisville to recover. The

[28]"The Drama of 'Catherine Howard,' written by the great French author Dumas, was translated by Miss Barnes last October, and read and approved by the management of the Park theatre, N. York, where it would have been brought out but that Miss Barnes' engagement at the south prevented her from performing it there. It was acted for the first time, with great success, in the city of Savannah in February last, and the critics spoke in the highest terms of its all absorbing interest. . ." (*Mo. Rep.,* May 20, 1840.)

Ravels soon departed for the East, but the Wellses lingered on the banks of the Mississippi and before very long came up to the Mound City to retrieve as much of their loss as they could. Perhaps they were not sorry to operate "on their own" without the competition of recognized favorites.

Dr. Odell expresses the belief that these young people, who were dancing at the Park in 1837, were "no doubt children of that Dublin actor who had recently joined the company. According to Ireland, the boy was afterwards known as Henri Wells, of the Ravel troupe; the girl [whom Dr. Odell elsewhere calls 'Harriet'] became the wife of Leon Javelli, of the same organisation, and was a prominent dancer in that galley."[24] It is possible that the father was with them in St. Louis, because the cast of *Flora and Zephyr* included a "Mr. Wells."[25]

Contemporary evidence would seem to indicate that the young dancers were spared the fate of the Barnes family. St. Louisans have always liked the dance, and still do to-day. Quite obviously there was something appealing about this youthful pair. The raptures of all the editors and correspondents cannot well have been entirely synthetic. The first piece offered was *The Dew Drop*, apparently a version of *La Sylphide*, in which Miss Wells had already been seen in New York and which on this occasion was sandwiched in between *Is He Jealous?* and *The Green Eyed Monster*.[26] This number was mounted three times during their stay, as was also *Flora and Zephyr*. *La Bayadere* was done twice. But the dancers were not always presented in complete ballets; on several evenings they were scheduled to do various *pas* between the light pieces which made up most of the bills.

Through the reviews in different papers there may occasionally be seen traces of preoccupations not strictly theatrical or Terpsichorean.

> We were agreeably surprised last night at witnessing these talented young Artists in the "Dew Drop." Modest in deportment

[24] Odell. *Annals*, IV, 128. Mrs. John Drew states that the brother and sister were members of the same party as her mother and herself which crossed from England in 1827 to join the Park company (*Autobiographical Sketch of Mrs. John Drew*, 18).

[25] *Missouri Republican*, May 25, 1840.

[26] Odell: *Annals*, IV, 204.

and dress, Miss Wells has studiously avoided those exhibitions of the figure which gives the blush to modesty. While her aerial movements, graceful attitudes and brilliant execution vie with the boasted specimens we have seen of foreign artists, Miss Wells flies the stage "a thing of air"—every movement is poetry, every attitude is grace. Nor does her talented brother deserve less praise.[37]

. . . . Miss Wells is, without question, the best danseuse that has appeared on our boards this season,—she has not the *muscular* power of Le Comte; but, we think, she is infinitely more graceful, and, withal, modest. Some of the tableaux were exceedingly beautiful. —Master Wells, when dancing with his sister, does all in his power to assist her and keep the attention of the spectators directed to her—reserving the exhibition of his own powers to a Pas Seul. . . .[38]

The light comedies, farces, and other afterpieces given during the Wells engagement can be disposed of briefly. Two spectacles, *The Jewess* on May 29, and *The Ice Witch* alone represent their class. There were, however, four novelties. One was the younger Colman's *Ways and Means,* given on the twenty-third with Ludlow as Sir David Dunder. Another, *Mr. H.* is Charles Lamb's unsuccessful farce about a man who wishes to conceal the fact that his name is *Hogsflesh.* It is interesting to note that in St. Louis it ran just twice as long as it had done on the occasion of its London premiere in 1806. It had two performances (on May 30 and June 2) with Ludlow in the name-part, and then was restored to the dusty shelf. The two other plays were *My Friend and My Wife* and *Policy Better than Pistols.*

Ludlow was fairly busy, taking part in several performances, as Sharp in *The Lying Valet* and as five different characters in *Of Age To-morrow,* in addition to Mr. H. Sol Smith made one appearance during his visit to the city, as Numpo in *'T is All a Farce* on the twenty-fifth. "OLD SOL'S NUMPO, Monday night, was as rich as cream, and kept the audience in a roar of laughter, from beginning to end," says the *Pennant* of the twenty-seventh. The writer goes on to say that he could not divest himself "of the idea that he *actually was* hungry. How is it, sir? *Do* you eat heartily? We put you to your purgation." The *Bulletin* of June 1 announced

[37]*Evening Gazette,* May 23, 1840.
[38]*Daily Bulletin,* May 25, 1840.

that Bateman's appearance in *A Roland for an Oliver* on that evening would be his first since his prolonged illness.

The last night of the Wells engagement saw a diversion of an extraordinary character. I quote the advertisement in the *Bulletin.*

THEATRE

BENEFIT OF MISS WELLS

The Chief of the OMAHA INDIANS, and a portion of his tribe, will attend the Theatre; among whom, the one recently tried for and acquitted of murdering a white man.

A comedy condensed from five to three acts, and entitled

LAUGHING THE ELIXIR OF LIFE

Gossamer	Mr. LUDLOW
Mrs. Mortimer	Mrs. FARREN
PAS STYRIEN	MISS & MASTER WELLS

THE DEW DROP

If dancers would not fill the house, perhaps wild Indians, including a possible murderer, might. I wonder what the Chief of the Omahas thought of Reynolds' *Laugh When You Can,* for that was what the rechristened comedy was. In my opinion he was lucky not to be able to understand the words of one of the silliest plays ever born of the brain of man, yet one which for our ancestors seemed to possess some now incomprehensible charm. The advertisement has one or two interesting points. For instance it illustrates once again the penchant of managers for juggling with the titles of the plays they presented, and the other the nonchalance with which they compressed a five act play into three acts.[29] So loose was the structure of many a play then current that such telescoping could be accomplished without serious damage either to the drama or to the audience.

This final program concluded, the young people danced off the local stage.

[29]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 265.

Enter the Hungarian Singers. These were four gentlemen who, according to Dr. Odell, sang in their national costumes. He gives their names as Rosen, Koln, Liebenstein, and Reich.[30] The *Republican* modified the first to *Rossen,* the last to *Rich.* One of their outstanding accomplishments was the "imitation of several instruments —viz—Flute, Clarionet, Trombone, & Bassoon (Music by Strilkley."[31] They sang on four evenings, including a benefit, but without setting the Mississippi aflame. Said the *Gazette,* the morning after their first outburst: "The warbling, *instrumentizing* performances of these vocalists are really wonderful. The theatre, last evening, was, owing to the state of the weather, rather thin. But so novel and unique is the style of their exhibitions, that we cannot suppose it can be otherwise than highly attractive." Yet it patently was otherwise, for on June 8 the editor commented that "hard times" must be responsible for the slim audiences which were greeting the Hungarians. Can it be these same singers that Joseph M. Field refers to in a letter from New Orleans dated April 30? Terming them "the Hungry Buggers," he says, "They drew a fine house for Miss Verity but they are humbugs and the people are finding 'em out pretty fast."

It was not only the "instrumentizing" singers who were unable to pull the partners out of the slough into which they were sinking. No attraction they could offer, not even the popular Edmon S. Conner, could draw good business unless we except the dancers. As the paper said, times were hard. Money was becoming scarcer and scarcer, and relief was not in sight. That, however, was not all. This was, as I have pointed out before, an election year, and not just any election year at that. Feelings, which in those days were prone to rise very high at such times, were exceptionally rabid as the conflict between the followers of Van Buren and of Harrison saw November growing nearer and nearer. The editors were, even so many months in advance, so deep in the campaign that they could spare little space to such inconsequentials as actors.

In the hope that a diet of light fare might lure the public into the great empty spaces the management now presented a series of

[30] Odell. *Annals,* IV, 328.

[31] *Missouri Republican,* June 5, 1840.

comedies and musical pieces with two performers who had not before been seen in St. Louis, although they were established favorites in other parts of the Mississippi Valley. One June 10 the partners announced through the press "an engagement for a few nights of Mr. JAS. THORNE (late of the Cincinnati Theatre) and Mrs. KENT, of the New York and Western Theatres, who will make their first appearance in this city."

Thorne was an English baritone or bass, now forty years old, who had been between 1830 and 1834 quite active in New York, and more recently in the West. Ludlow asserts that his voice had "great power and smoothness" and that he excelled in such parts as Figaro, Baron Pompolino (*Cinderella*), Caliban, and Gabriel (*Guy Mannering*).[32] He is remembered also as the partner of J. M. Scott in the management of Western theatres. Like so many whose comings and goings are chronicled in these pages, he had almost run his race; three years later he died at sea.

Mrs. Kent came of a very musical family of German extraction by the name of Eberle, several of whose members were well known in the theatres of New York. As Elizabeth Eberle she had been in 1828, as a girl of seventeen, a member of a company under Ludlow's management which had made a brief stay at the Chatham Theatre. Since then she had married one William Kent and centered her activities further west. Ludlow says, "Her style of acting was piquant and effective, more especially in soubrettes and chambermaids."[33]

Mrs. Kent and Thorne thoroughly delighted the gentlemen who wrote the theatrical items for the press, and from that fact, perhaps, both they and their employers derived some measure of satisfaction. But, when it came to the material appreciation which they certainly did not consider unimportant, that was another matter, and Ludlow must have been dismal indeed when he looked into his emptying coffers. Yet, assuredly, the public cannot have stayed away for fear of being bored. There was nothing depressing about the pieces offered for their delectation.

The stars opened on June 10 in *The Englishman in India* and *The Loan of a Lover*, taking part in both plays. Then came *Married*

[32]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 558.
[33]*Ibid.*, 616.

Life and *Hunting a Turtle; Simpson and Company* and *The Swiss Cottage,* followed by *My Young Wife and My Old Umbrella,* with Cowell; *The Ladder of Love, My Friend the Governor* ("first time"), and *Bachelor's Buttons.*

This is not exactly an awe-inspiring list, but the critics voiced no complaints. One of them, writing in the *Bulletin* on Monday, the fifteenth, in order to help his stage-friend-in-need, had this to say: "Not since the dedication of the Temple of the Drama in this city, have we had better acting in Comedy than has been exhibited in the last few nights. Thorne, the popular manager, late of the Cincinnati, Vicksburgh and Natchez theatres and Mrs. Kent (well known a few years since as the fascinating Miss Eberle,) have been doing a few of their best parts in their best style and perhaps no two performers ever were so well calculated to sustain each other. In their line, (which may be termed 'high low comedy,') they are unsurpassed on the American stage. In such parts as 'Tom Tape' [*The Englishman in India*], 'Peter Spike' [*The Loan of a Lover*], 'Natz Teick' [*The Swiss Cottage*] &c, Thorne is without a superior, and his 'Baron Pompolino [*Cinderella*] never was equalled. We rejoice that the managers have returned to something like the true legitimate drama, and we doubt not they will be rewarded with full houses. Tonight Thorne appears as 'Billy Lackaday' and Mrs. Kent as 'The Middy Ashore.' "

Billy Lackaday, although only a subordinate character in *Sweethearts and Wives,* was a favorite part with comedians and frequently was emphasized at the expense of a role structurally much more important. The Middy Ashore rejoices in the cheerful cognomen of "Harry Halcyon." I wonder just how convincing the twenty-nine-year-old soubrette was as the jolly tar. Whether convincing or not, however, she was evidently considered good enough to be encored the next evening at Thorne's benefit as a curtain raiser to *Cinderella.*

This *opus* was not exactly Rossini's opera of that name, but a strange mélange of what might be called "Rossiniana," passages from several of the works of the popular Italian composer. According to Dr. Odell, it was "an English adaptation by Rophino Lacy."[84] But,

[84]Odell: *Annals,* III, 497.

whatever it was, it had been for several seasons a tried-and-true stand-by of Ludlow and Smith. According to the latter, the public liked it very much, but some heretics suggested that it would be better if they cut out the music. Rossini's rather florid melodies are not the easiest in the world to sing, and, considering the vocal prowess of the various actors and actresses who were called upon to warble them, one wonders if there may not perhaps have been something to the criticism. Unquestionably the scenery, which was reputedly gorgeous, had a great deal to do with *Cinderella's* perennial appeal.

This production probably was at least relatively good. The *Pennant's* reviewer wrote on June 22 that Larkin was one of perhaps "not more than *six* men on the stage in the United States who can *get through* with the music, and among these Mr. Larkin certainly ranks by no means the lowest. Mr. L. is a man who understands his business, and, so far as we are aware, has never assumed or presumed upon his acquirements, to insult the public by demanding their approbation for attempts actually disgraceful and ridiculous." So it would seem that the role of Felix was in good keeping. Thorne had the requisite voice and his Pompolino was a recognized accomplishment. Cowell undertook Pedro, and a newcomer named Carr appeared for that night only as Alidoro. It seems strange that the difficult part of Dandini should have been entrusted to a tyro like young Dick Russell; surely it must have been beyond his limited powers, but managers cannot always be choosers. Miss Morgan was the Cinderella, Mrs. Kent the Clorinda, and Mrs. Farren the Thisbe. There is no record of the performance except that in the *Pennant,* which, incidentally, had some kind words for Smith, the scenic artist.

There now followed two benefits, one each for Mrs. Farren and Mrs. Kent, whose first one, to use a slang phrase not yet coined in her day, had proved to be a "flop." Ludlow, struggling to turn the tide, summoned Conner back to the city and established him as the company's leading man, though taking good care in the publicity to preserve the fiction that he was once more a visiting star. For Mary Ann Farren's night, Ludlow outdid himself. He fired every gun he had in one overwhelming broadside. In addition to the estimable

matron herself, he presented Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Russell, Miss Morgan, Conner, Thorne (usually misspelled "Thorn"), Larkin, Farren, Carr, and himself in a grand potpourri: Act IV of *Richelieu,* Act I of *Cinderella,* Acts III and V of *Tortesa,* and *Simpson and Company.*

The gentlemen of the press, always ready to break a lance for the popular favorite, did not fail her this time. It is interesting to note the difference in the approach between the pleas of those days and the advertisements of our own time. The one card our contemporary publicity experts seem to have overlooked so far is the conscience of the potential playgoer. But that will no doubt be played in time. Let us take a look at a sample culled from the *Bulletin* of June 17.

Mrs. Farren's Benefit

Mrs. Farren presents a most attractive bill for her benefit this evening. We observe that Mrs. Kent—who en passant, in her line, is decidedly the best comedian that has appeared on our boards this season—Thorne, (who has been delighting a small but select audience for the last few days, and, as Peter Spuyk, stands unrivalled), Conner, (our new acquaintance but old friend, whose personation of the characters of Richelieu, Angelo and Huon have not been excelled), and Ludlow, the manager, will all appear on this occasion.—Apart from this galaxy of talent, Mrs. Farren has claims upon the theatre-going portions of our community which we hope, this evening, to see acknowledged. If assiduity in her profession—if always being correct in her parts—if a true conception of the author, always 'suiting the action to the word, and the word to the action'—deserve encouragement, then to Mrs. Farren should it be extended. She is, 'emphatically speaking, a *fixed star,* from whose continued rays we enjoy more pleasure than from those emanating from a meteor that sparkles but for a moment and then disappears in gloom. She is possessed of talents of no common order, and stands at the head of her profession as all who have had the pleasure of witnessing her will acknowledge. We hope to see a brilliant array of beauty assembled this evening, to greet with smiles one of their own sex, who is so deserving of their patronage, and one who has always exerted herself to the utmost to win a place in their esteem. P. C.

Could *P. C.* be our acquaintance Mr. Carr? There are several names in the Directory which would fit, including two Pierre Chouteaus, but I have no evidence as to who it was. The style is some-

what reminiscent of that of Eaton's admirer whose encomiums appeared in the same columns. The next evening he wielded his pen again, this time in behalf of Mrs. Kent, who, having had "an unpropitious night on the occasion of her former Benefit," was trying again. "Mrs. Kent," he averred, "is certainly a very superior actress —reads, dresses, and acts well." This reference to her dressing reminds us that the players were responsible for their own costumes.[85] The lady presented herself as Ellen Douglas in *The Lady of the Lake* supported by Mrs. Farren as Blanche of Devon, and Conner as Roderick Dhu. Before the pièce de résistance, Thorne was seen as Pequillo in *My Friend the Governor,* and, after it, Conner as Tristram Fickle in *The Weathercock.*

With the hope that she did not plead in vain, we now take leave of Mrs. Kent and her associate, who closed their engagement with this final bill. By July they were back in Cincinnati, for on the sixth of that month, Smith wrote his partner that, having fled from his Mobile creditors, he was about to play an engagement there "in conjunction with Thorne & Mrs. Kent. The manager takes $120 each night (*if it is in*) and he, Thorne, Mrs. Kent, & myself divide the balance equally—Fifth, Seventh, & Ninth nights Benefits, at which we all play gratis.[86] I think the prospect is fair for my making at least $50 at my Benefit—tho' I am told $100 house is a prodigy. . . ." St. Louis was not alone in the theatrical doldrums.

The spring season now hurried on to its welcome close. The return of Conner brought the return of tragedy, which, one would think, would have come as a pleasant relief after so much trifling. But first there was another none-too-serious offering, the melodramatic spectacle of *The Bottle Imp,* new to St. Louis although New York had known it twelve seasons before. It seems to have been chosen as a display piece for the scene-designer, Smith. The advertisement in the *Republican* (June 19) says that this was "the first entire piece produced in this theatre, by that talented artist." The *Bulletin* of the same day asserts that "Great preparations have been

[85]Mat Field, for several years prior to 1840 a prominent member of the Ludlow and Smith company, speaks in his diary for the spring months of 1839 of his efforts to assemble costumes for certain of the parts he was to play. (*Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society,* January, 1949.)

[86]Sol Smith to N. M. Ludlow, July 6, 1840.

made during the season to bring it out in fine style." It was repeated the next evening with a different curtain raiser and afterpiece.

On June 22 came Ludlow's benefit, Conner, and Shakespeare. St. Louis saw *Romeo and Juliet* for the first time in a year and, I believe, for the sixth time in its history. Of course, Conner and Mrs. Farren were the lovers. Ludlow was a bit mature for Mercutio, but older men than he have essayed the fiery youth since then. Farren was probably a worthy Friar Lawrence, and no doubt Cowell got all there was to be got out of Peter. But I doubt if Mrs. Russell could be vulgar enough for an ideal Nurse; probably the broader lines were cut "to spare the blush of Modesty."

There now followed a sequence of standard plays and afterpieces with one or two inconsequential novelties among the latter. After *Richelieu* and *No!* on the twenty-sixth, a new *note* was introduced on the next evening by the "Hungry Singers," who, the advertisements promised, "will give an old tune to new words, and show the secret of the Echo." These gentlemen were apparently burlesquing the recently-departed Hungarians, and may have been either amateurs or regular members of the company. Whoever they were, they were sandwiched in between *Reformation,* with Mrs. Farren and Cowell, and *Charcoal Sketches,* with the latter.

From this date on Ludlow handled his affairs with a heavy heart. News then reached him of the death of his son William, a small boy who had fallen overboard from the steamboat *St. Louis* en route with his mother to New Orleans. There is no record of another appearance of the unhappy father on the stage during the brief remainder of the regular season.

The morning before the performances of *Reformation* and *Charcoal Sketches,* the following card was printed in the *Bulletin.*

THEATRE—A CARD
FAREWELL
BENEFIT OF OLD JOE COWELL

In stating the above melancholy fact, he don't mean to have it understood, that he, of his own free will, retires from the stage, but, that the stage retires from him—neither is he going to England to

see the Queen, nor to New York to see Fanny Ellsler[37]—but intends seriously to settle in St. Louis; therefore, if his numerous friends will drop in at the Theatre on SATURDAY EVENING, June 27th, they will probably, for the last time, witness a *good old comedy,*—hear the *Hungry Singers*—see the Echo!!—and have lots of fun," according to the laws of the land and the Statues of William and Mary.

As matters turned out, this did not actually constitute his last appearance on the stage, because, according to the findings of Dr. A. H. Wilson he was seen as one of the Dromios and in other roles at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia in 1844.[38] On the other hand, for the time-being he did settle down in St. Louis and was even candidate for public office. The *Pennant* (June 27), apropos of his benefit, had a few words to say about the departing actor. ". . . Mr. Cowell is one of the best low comedians now on the stage—a remnant of the *Old School;* and, if occasionally he forgets himself, and descends to buffoonery, it is, perhaps, more on account of the bad taste of the public than from any wish of his own. . . ."

I suspect that Old Joe and his family were jettisoned for reasons of economy. On May 4, Sol had written Ludlow from Mobile: "Wm. Chapman has applied for an engagement, & I think it will be to our interest to engage him;—of course the Cowell family are to go.—Chapman's wife is afflicted with Paralysis & is very low at present."[39] The phrasing of the benefit plea also would seem to indicate that the retirement was not altogether voluntary. Despite the fact that Bateman was included in the evacuation order, he rejoined the firm at a later date. I have spoken before of the discrimination in the matter of capitalizing in the newspaper advertisements. There must have been some reason underlying this policy, and the whole thing must have left Cowell disgruntled. Ludlow makes it clear in his memoirs that he did not admire this comedian. He especially did not like his observations on the subject of the Ludlow dramatic companies he had encountered in his peregrinations, recorded four years after these events in his *Thirty Years Passed Among the Players in England and America.* "At page 90 of his

[37]Fanny Elssler (1810-1884), celebrated Austrian dancer, who was creating a furore in this country.

[38]*A History of the Philadelphia Theatre 1835 to 1855,* 684.

[39]Sol Smith to N. M. Ludlow, March 29, 1841.

pamphlet," says the senior St. Louis partner, "Mr. Cowell makes a statement to this effect: that in 1837-8, Ludlow & Smith, as a firm, took the paper currency of the country only at specie value, where the paper was at large discount, and then paid it out at *par,* or as indicated on the face of the paper, by which they made great profits. Now this was simply and unqualifiedly an *untruth.* But old Joe was not particular about what he said when he took a dislike to any one. He was never known to say a pleasant word about any person beyond his own family, unless he thought there was a chance of making something off of him, and then, when he found such a one, he was the greatest *toady* in the world."[40]

The closing week of the season saw some old favorites, including *The Mountaineers, William Tell, La Tour de Nesle,* and *The Lady of Lyons,* and also the more recent *Love* and *The Bottle Imp. William Tell* (plus *Charcoal Sketches*) on June 30 was dedicated to "the Natchez Sufferers," that Mississippi town having recently been overwhelmed by a disastrous storm. The managers had announced their plan on the twenty-sixth, offering to "put the expenses for the occasion much lower than the usual charges."

Conner evidently liked the role of a national hero, for on the evening of his benefit on July 2 he closed the program as Andreas Hofer in *Hofer* or *The Tell of the Tyrol,* a play new to St. Louis, after taking part in selected acts from *Love* and *The Sea Captain.* Farren also tried a novelty, a very novel novelty. In the Friday papers he announced that "Mr. Roper, professor of gymnastics, will make his first appearance on the stage, in this city in the character of Jerry Hawthorn" in *Tom and Jerry,* the Tom being Conner, while Mrs. Farren, Farren himself, and Cowell contributed their bits to a rather unorthodox performance. They were not, however, called upon to face the local gymnast's pummeling, that dubious distinction being assumed by someone outside the fold. "In the course of the piece," says the advertisement in the *Republican* of July 3, "A Set-to, or Boxing Match between Mr. Roper and an amateur." Probably, for the sake of dramatic effect, the amateur gallantly succumbed. Any other conclusion would certainly have been very poor advertising for Mr. Roper.

[40]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 359.

Another grand composite bill marked the close of the regular spring season after fourteen weeks of not so good fortune and bad, mostly bad. This involved *The Bottle Imp,* Act I of *The Aethiop,* Act I of *Peter Wilkins* or *The Flying Islanders,* and Act I of *The Flying Dutchman,* the emphasis being, it will be seen, upon spectacle. Between the acts, the Hungry Singers were to "give their second, last and eternal farewell Aria, and . . . their grand secret of the Echo." About this time Ludlow received from his absent partner a letter dated from Mobile, June 9: "D—n the newspapers, which in attempting to help us, do us an injury by raising the expectations of our creditors." Thanks to the friendly journalists, said creditors refused to believe that business had been bad. So Sol sold a $120 watch to pay a debt of $40. The watch followed his house.

Normally these proceedings would have marked the cessation of operations until the opening of the fall campaign late in August. But, for no good reason whatsoever, this summer was not permitted to follow the path of normalcy. The cheerful, but none too practical, George Percy Farren decided to attempt a summer season. Few details of this misadventure have been preserved for posterity, except partial casts of two productions, but there is no doubt about the outcome. The comedian impresario tells us himself through the medium of the press on July 18.

Mr. Farren begs to inform his friends and the public that having tried the experiment of keeping the theatre open during the dull season for their Benefit, he has "gained a loss," that obliges him to close it this evening "for his own BENEFIT."

He is happy to announce that Mrs. FARREN has beneficently tendered her services and that Mr. LUDLOW has given him the benefit of his and though the Beneficiary has to acknowledge many kinds of benefits in St. Louis, the beneficence of his friend's on this occasion will be to him most beneficial.

To close this chapter I turn back the calendar to July 9 and lift from the pages of the *Pennant* an epistle which plays a familiar theme.

The Degeneracy of the modern drama is a fruitful theme of speculation; and yet, the true cause of it is involved in as much mystery as that of the aurora borealis or the eccentricities of Encke's comet. . . . Shakespeare and Johnson and Massinger and Sheridan

are quietly thrust upon the shelf to give place to blue fire and sheet-iron thunder or to make stage-room for some capering Dutch prodigy to cut her indecorous and ridiculous antics upon.

The drama—considered as one of the fine arts—exists no longer. *Show shops* are plenty enough—but the green curtain has fallen upon every thing like *intellectual* dramatic representation, never, perhaps, to be upraised. The only *prompter* who can ring it up is Public Opinion—who, intoxicated with meretricious show and sensual excitement sleeps upon his post. . . .

IV

THE PLOT THICKENS

Fall of 1840

Before Ludlow and Smith resumed operations on August 24, they were anticipated by a "Mr. Newton, Irish Comedian" with a triple bill given in the Atheneum Hall "over the Bank Exchange," Number 145 Main Street, on the thirteenth of the same month.[1] The plays offered were *William Tell, Bombastes Furioso,* and *The Secret,* with the promoter singing Irish songs and some unidentified dancers disporting themselves. Newton announced that on this occasion "several members" of the Atheneum Society will "make their first appearance in public" and also that a "number of professional gentlemen have volunteered." There seems, however, to have been confusion. *The Pennant* of August 14 printed under the heading "A Card . . . Theatre ATHENEUM" a plea from one C. W. Russell that the ladies and gentlemen of St. Louis support his benefit scheduled for the next evening. But a "Communication" the following day stated flatly that the card was a mistake and "is withdrawn. . . . It is well known that the Melpothalian Dramatic Association is an entire private concern—that they are quite independent, and do not wish to make a living by playing—it is merely for amusement to them, and they are only assisted by public performers in the Association. Mr. Russell has no benefit." All the same, Mr. Russell's plea reappeared with the scene shifted from the Atheneum to Xaupi's Salon.

The original notice of the undertaking is rather ambiguous, inasmuch as under the heading "THEATRE FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY," Newton (who had been a member of the regular company when it had dedicated its new building in 1837) added that he was opening the Atheneum Hall, a phrase usually employed to designate the opening of a season. Whatever the "ONE NIGHT ONLY" may have been intended to mean, the producer did not limit himself to a single attempt. In the *Gazette* of the twenty-sixth he announced *Barbarossa* and *Charles II* for the benefit of the Catholic Orphan

[1] *Evening Gazette,* August 13, 1840.

Asylum. On that evening, however, the results were patently disappointing, because a card in the same paper three days later informed play-loving St. Louisans that "in consequence of a mistake by which the performance for the Benefit of the above Institution was not advertised in season to be generally known and in compliance with numerous requests by friends of the Association who wish to aid the Orphans," there would be a repetition of *Barbarossa* in addition to "BOMBASTUS FURIOSA."[2] On September 3 Newton advertised "a portion of the National Drama, entitled BRIAN BOROIHME OR, THE SONS OF ERIN" plus *The Irish Tutor* to be given the next evening, this time for his own benefit, his last appearance "previous to his departure for the South." Exit Mr. Newton.

The 1840 fall season was not one which Ludlow and Smith remembered with pleasure. In compiling his memoirs, the latter dismissed it with a few words on the ground that he was absent from the city most of the time.[3] Ludlow also has little to say on the subject, and what he does say, as is so often the case, is inaccurate.[4] The season was not without its points, but these were not on the right side of the ledger. "The money crisis which had commenced in the Eastern States a year or two before had now reached the West," says Ludlow, "and the people, becoming alarmed and panic-stricken, had been drawing tight their purse-strings. During the spring season of this year in St. Louis, we had thought it our best policy to lower the admission to the first places in the house from one dollar to seventy-five cents. But the citizens of St. Louis were anxious and uncertain about the future, and not in the humor, generally, for amusements." So by the end of October, the managers had had enough, and the company descended the river to open the new American Theatre in New Orleans.

The good points of the season were a competent stock company and four gifted stars, only one of whom, however, proved to be financially attractive. The regulars still included the Farrens, Mrs. Russell, Miss Stanard, and Miss Morgan, in addition to the two proprietors, both of whom appeared occasionally. To these were added Conner, first still masquerading as a star, but later recognized

[2]*Evening Gazette*, August 29, 1840.
[3]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 150.
[4]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 525-530.

as the "leading actor." New too were Sankey, who had, it will be recalled, been with the McKenzie-Jefferson troupe, a young man by the name of H. H. Hamill, and a couple by the name of Maynard. Hamill had caught Smith's eye the previous April down in Mobile and he had engaged him on the spot. He reported that the new recruit seemed "modest & unassuming—*don't drink a drop*. . . . He is better than Bateman, take him all together & if he comes, must come for much less."[5] Come he did, although he did not take over Bateman's repertory, but, ironically enough, shortly before the close of the season, he was discharged for "appearing on the Stage last night in a State of inebriety."[6]

As for the Maynards, they deserve a few words. She, who was evidently later the wife of Charles Burke, had been acting in the South for a season or two, since Douglas Hunt notes in his *The Nashville Theatre, 1830-1840* that she took a benefit in the Tennessee capital in July, 1838.[7] On the previous page a "Miss Maynard" is listed, presumably the same person. At all events, she was a lady of mystery, too much so as it turned out for Ludlow and Smith's code of morals. Together with her current husband—if husband he was—she remained with the company throughout the St. Louis season, but after the opening of the theatre in New Orleans, Smith, as will be seen, decided that it was time to part, a decision apparently shared by her husband. Winter says Burke "was twice wedded, but left no children. Both his marriages were unfortunate. His first wife, Margaret Murcoyne, a native of Philadelphia, born in 1818, died in that city in 1849."[8] Brown contributes more data: "Mrs. Burke, formerly Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Cuvelier, Mrs. Maynard, and Miss Booth, but whose right name was Margaret Murcoyne. . . ." He states that she married Robert Henry in 1834, and that he soon died and she married Cuvelier.[9] Since in 1840 Burke was only eighteen, it is not likely that she married him for at least a few years.

On December 11, the junior partner wrote to Ludlow, who was in Mobile: "I rec'd. thro' the P office a sort of 'circular'

[5]Sol Smith to N. M. Ludlow, April 14, 1840.
[6]Ludlow and Smith Letter Book, October 16, 1840.
[7]P. 64.
[8]William Winter: *The Jeffersons*, 156.
[9]Brown: *American Stage*.

(printed) about Mr. & Mrs. Maynard—and I would send it, but I don't think it is worth paying 8 3/4c postage for; I will save a copy—it is the same story the papers had last summer. This morning they were posted all over town!—Acting on our agreement of action on the subject, I sent her a note, saying that 'in consequence of certain circumstances coming to our knowledge (without our seeking) we could not avail ourselves of her services in this establishment any longer.'" In a postscript he adds: "Maynard (I forgot to tell you) sought an interview with me to ask *my advice* about the circular—*I had none to give*—but opened the other business. He said he had discarded her (his wife) & had nothing to do with her—He remains."

The document (which Smith did forward to Ludlow after all), headed "MR. & MRS. MAYNARD ALIAS GAYNARD 'A ROSE (!) BY ANY OTHER NAME" &, gives an extended account of their supposed infamies, including illicit affairs and the attempted assassination of a manager. "As regards MRS. MAYNARD, she should be considered a more dangerous person to the community than the public wanton, for with them there is no disguise, and they can easily be guarded against; but with a person travelling as she does, among strangers, and affecting so much modesty is sure to insinuate into the company of persons of responsibility; and therefore we warn the public against her, and the *thing* she calls her husband; the stratagems which they devise, the disguises which they assume and the subterfuges by which their conduct escapes the eye and evades the vengeance of offended justice. OPELOUSAS. It is neither fear nor shame, but the fact in law that THE GREATER THE TRUTH THE GREATER THE LIBEL, induces the writer to withhold his name." Whoever he was, he put an end to her connection with Ludlow and Smith.[10]

Some weeks before the opening of the season, the managers addressed to C. H. Mueller, whom they were engaging to lead their orchestra in place of E. Woolf, who had just left them to take a

[10]Mrs. Maynard is reported by William Bryan Gates in his "Performances of Shakespeare in Ante-Bellum Mississippi," (*The Journal of Mississippi History*, January, 1843) to have played Desdemona in Natchez in 1838.

position with Burton in New York, a letter which throws light on some phases of theatrical management at the beginning of the fifth decade of the century.[11] (I cannot tell whether or not this Mueller was the same man who had occupied the post with the firm previously. The initials of the first leader are given by Smith as C. M., but the discrepancy might easily be due to carelessness in writing.[12] On the other hand, the letter does not seem to be the kind the managers would have written to a recent employee who would certainly have been familiar with their customs.)

You are in *great error* in regards to terms we gave Mr. Woolf—He was paid no greater number of weeks than the rest of the company—and was subject to the same proportionate deduction for the summer season. Further, Mr. Woolf's engagement was made three years ago, when the average receipts of theatres in general were three times what they are now. Salaries all over the United States have come down much within the last three years. Music arranged or composed for us by persons receiving a salary from us for such services, we always consider as our own property. We cannot promise to Mrs. Mueller any particular line of business—we engage nobody nowadays for particular or exclusive lines—we should expect Mrs. M. to play such business as may be required of her. With these understandings we offer for your services as stated in your letter to us of the 27th July—twenty dollars per week—and for Mrs. Mueller ten dollars per week (jointly *thirty Dolls*) for the ensuing full season here in St. Louis—and for the Southern or winter season twenty-five Dolls for yours and fifteen for Mrs. Ms. services (jointly *forty* Dolls.) The Leader with us has never in any instance had a benefit night. It has never been asked, or given. If circumstances would permit (of which we must be the judges) perhaps we should not object to your taking a night, provided we could agree upon the charges; that is a point we cannot determine at this time. As we have Mrs. Russell engaged to play old women 'tis not probable that we should call on Mrs. Mueller *often* for such characters. We do not insure any certain number of weeks during the year—We have heretofore played from forty to fifty weeks as circumstances in business would justify.

Evidently Mueller accepted their terms because Smith mentions him as orchestra leader in his recollections. "Mrs. M." is not referred to in this book, but contemporary newspapers reveal that,

[11] Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 156.
[12] *Ibid.*, 133.

like the other lady of the same name, she played bit parts, even on occasion more important ones.

The season, originally scheduled to open on August 17, but delayed by Ludlow's indisposition, got under way on August 24 with a double bill composed of *The Founding of the Forest* and *The Conquering Game* with Conner, announced as "engaged for SIX NIGHTS," playing the Count de Valmont in one, and Charles XII in the other.[13] In the melodrama young Hamill, still presumably living up to his reputation for sobriety, made his first appearance in St. Louis, as Florian, and Sankey his first with "the established company" as Bertrand. Ludlow was seen as L'Eclair, Farren as Gaspard, Mrs. Farren as the Unknown Female, Mrs. Russell as Monica, and Miss Morgan (no mention of a song) as Rosabelle. Conner's chief support in the farce was Mrs. Farren, who played Catherine.

"During the vacation," announced the advertisement, "the Theatre has been thoroughly cleansed—and preparations made for the production of much novelty." The "novelty" was to be what we today know as "horse opera," actually not much of a novelty so far as St. Louis was concerned even in 1840. Ludlow asserts that the seats had been removed to make "a clear area or circle for ring equestrian performances."[14] So far he is doubtless correct, because it is very unlikely that the work of transformation could have been done while the season was in actual progress, but he is clearly in error when he says, "Our fall season opened with drama on the stage, and equestrian performances in the circle instead of a farce." Farce the afterpiece certainly was, unless the advertisements were completely at variance with the facts. There is no contemporary evidence that any horses appeared before September 15.

The next fortnight was given over to standard pieces, only one novelty being offered, the most important plays *She Stoops to Conquer* (advertised as *The Bashful Man*), *The Lady of Lyons, Catharine and Petruchio, Romeo and Juliet,* and *The School for Scandal.* The fiction that Conner was a visiting star was maintained through August 31, when he had his benefit. For a few more nights, his name was featured, but when, on September 8, a

[13]*Daily Pennant,* August 17, 1840; *Missouri Republican,* August 22, 1840.
[14]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life as I Found It,* 526.

star of greater eminence arrived in town, he dwindled into a mere leading man and so remained until the end of the season. His roles during his brief stardom included, in addition to the Count de Valmont, Ambrose Gwinette, Octavian in *The Mountaineers,* and Halbert McDonald in *Glencoe* or *The Fate of the McDonalds* by Talfourd. The performance of this tragedy was advertised as the first in America,[15] and it may have been, for, according to Dr. Odell, New York did not see it until 1848, when it was acted without success at the Broadway.[16] In all these plays the leading lady was Mrs. Farren, and the support included her husband, Sankey, and Hamill.

During these two weeks, Ludlow also was much to the fore, playing his usual line of part, among them his favorite Young Marlow in *She Stoops,* which was given on August 28 without benefit of Conner, and with "Young Dick" Russell as Tony Lumpkin. The next evening, Conner being still off the stage, he played Mr. Ferment in *Reform.* Most of his other appearances were in run-of-the-mill afterpieces. Smith was seen less frequently. On August 26, he was Sadi in *The Mountaineers,* his name like those of Conner and Ludlow (Killmallock) being printed in capitals in the newspapers. The managers seldom at this time took part in the same plays. Sol's second appearance was as Sancho in *Lovers' Quarrels* on August 29, when his partner was performing in the comedy of the evening.

In their *One Man in His Time,* Maud and Otis Skinner call attention to "the haphazard productions of a leading theatre in so important a city as Boston."[17] "Every actor had a repertory of characters hidden away in his head, and every manager had the plays corresponding to those characters on his office shelves." The Ludlow and Smith institution, although one of the more carefully operated companies in the country, was no shining exception to the general rule. The flexibility of the programs and the readiness of the players to meet an emergency were manifested on August 28 when *She Stoops* and *Ways and Means* were hastily substituted for *The Youthful Days of Harrison,* which had been advertised only the day before. No reason for the change of bill was given.

[15]*Missouri Republican,* August 27, 1840.
[16]Odell. *Annals,* V, 341
[17]P. 64.

September 1 saw the advent of the first *bona fide* star of the fall season, the comedian George H. Barrett, commonly known as "Gentleman George," who appears from all accounts to have been the John Drew of his day. Phelps in his *Players of a Century* says that all who saw him would agree that "he was indisputably the best light comedian in America."[18] Although six feet tall, he seems to have been exceptionally graceful in his movements and ideal for roles which called for what might be termed "drawing-room manners."

As he descended the Mississippi on his way to New Orleans shortly after the first of October, Smith, depressed by the discouraging trend of events, whiled away part of his time by writing in his diary, his notes being colored by his melancholy mood. His entry of October 8 dealt in part with his recent star. "George H. Barrett (latterly known as 'Gentleman George' played six nights, & had a very good benefit.—This gentleman is very much liked, wherever known, as an actor, but more so, by a certain class, as a *bon vivant*. He has been a favorite in the American theatre for a great many years. In 1837, (I think it was,) he tried London, & failed. He has lately met with a *domestic misfortune,* which it was thought would induce him to leave the stage; but he seems to bear up under it, with much fortitude—he seems in as good spirits as ever—hunting, riding, frolicking, & enjoying the society of his friends, who are numerous & valuable." He had recently divorced his wife for alcoholism.

Barrett was not new to St. Louis, having played under the banner of Ludlow and Smith in the spring of 1839. In reckoning the number of his appearances Smith must have included the benefit, a rather unusual procedure, as the engagement ran from September 1 through September 7, the house being of course dark on Sunday. But Gentleman George put in a busy week, and how he found free moments for hunting and frolicking it is now difficult to understand. For he took part in two plays on each of his six nights.

He was presented first in *The Lady of Lyons,* not as the romantic Claude, that role going to Conner, but as Colonel Damas, though it was made clear in the advertisements that he was the star. Mrs. Farren displayed her usual Pauline, with Hamill as Beauseant, and Sankey as Deschapelles.

[18]Phelps: *Players of a Century,* 67

We are indebted to the *Pennant* of September 3 for a review which really tells us something of the performance, of its merits and demerits.

We were very much pleased with Mr. Barrett's personation of Col. Damas Tuesday evening, and Mr. Conner's Claude Melnotte, with the exception of his description of his Italian Home—which, by the way, is about the only good acting portion of the whole part. —This should be done very quietly and elegantly. Melnotte is acting at that moment with successful hypocrisy—for he has just suppressed his feelings by a strong effort; and not one particle of *real* emotion should permit itself to be seen. . . . Beauseant was a dreadful performance—nearly as bad as that of his companion of the 'diamond snuff-box.' Mme. DeChapelles dressed and looked too young and rosy for the part. She should be gawdy but not fresh. The French ladies of that period eschewed health and good humored cheerfulness, as they would have done poison. It was considered decidedly vulgar. Mrs. Farren played Pauline in her usual style of excellence; and, altogether we were very much amused by the evening's performance.

We must not forget Charley Smith's new drop—a sweet, beautiful thing, with the exception of the bandit on the right, who has struck a terrific attitude, without any apparent reason, and the young gentleman and lady over the wall, who have no possible business there, except to mar the effect of the scene.

The word *drop* in the last paragraph is ambiguous. Since the scene described does not fit any in the play, I assume that the word denotes the curtain and that the young artist was not reverting to the outmoded custom of painting characters on back-drops.

Then, after an overture, the guest played Mr. Tompkins in *33 John Street,* the erstwhile Pauline now reduced to Lady Crazy. On Wednesday the same pair filled the name-parts in *Catharine and Petruchio,* probably as well as those roles had ever been filled in St. Louis. Garrick's tabloid version of Shakespeare's farce was on this particular evening only the afterpiece; yet it would seem today of more consequence than the main play of the evening, *The Englishman in India,* in which Barrett acted Tom Tape to the Mirza of Conner, the Sir Matthew Scraggs of Farren, the Count Glorious of Sankey, the Sally of Mrs. Farren, and the Lady Scraggs of Mrs. Russell.

September 3 saw the debut of the "dreadful" Mrs. Maynard as Juliet to the Romeo of Conner. Barrett was the Mercutio, a role for which he was well fitted except in the matter of age, but, after succumbing to the sword of an anonymous Tybalt (probably Hamill), he re-appeared as Toby Tramp in *The Mummy,* Mrs. Farren being the Susan. Mr. Maynard made his bow the following evening as Herbert in the "excellent comedy of the TWO FRIENDS." Gentleman George starred as Ambrose, and Mesdames Farren and Maynard were seen respectively as Elinor and Rose. The afterpiece was *Perfection* with the familiar team of Barrett and Farren. Conner, not having been engaged in either play, obliged with "Bucks, Have at Ye All" between the plays, after Mr. Lavette had danced a Highland fling.

Saturday evening the managers fired a broadside to close the star's regular engagement. The advertisement foretold in capitals the appearances of "Mr. Barrett, (his last night,) MR. CONNER, MRS. MAYNARD, MR. LUDLOW, MR. SOL SMITH, MR. FARREN, MR. MAYNARD, MR. SANKEY, MRS. RUSSELL, &c, &c." Mrs. Farren was overlooked by the publicity man or the printer, but she was nevertheless scheduled to be on hand as Sophia in *The Road to Ruin,* the piece de resistance of the evening. Things did not, however, come off as planned. "We were disappointed," observed the *Pennant* on September 7, "in not witnessing the good old comedy of the *Road to Ruin* Saturday evening—the managers, having been obliged, for the second time, only, during the opening of the St. Louis Theatre, four years ago, to change the regularly announced performance on account of the illness of a performer.[19] The ever acceptable trifle of the *Blue Devils,* however, was rattled off in first rate style. Young Russell and Sankey really did themselves real credit. Old Megrim and Annette were well played by Mr. and Mrs. Farren. The *Two Friends,* in our opinion, altogether too full of kissing and hugging and crying. There are some good passages in it, and Barrett's part was well played." The paper expressed regret at the imminent departure of Larkin for the East. The evening was brought to a close by Mrs. Farren and the Maynards in *The Married Rake.* The managers' contributions

[19]This assertion I think is not accurate.

were made between the two plays, Ludlow declaiming the hard-worked "Dissertation on Faults" and Smith offering a "Comic Medley." What an evening!

Barrett, of course, still had his benefit to play, and for it he chose *The School for Scandal* and *Three Weeks after Marriage*. The *Republican* of September 7, the day of the farewell, expressed the opinion that the cast advertised was stronger "than has ever before to our knowledge been presented to an audience in this city." This opinion was probably correct, despite the fact that the Sheridan masterpiece had fared as well as most plays in St. Louis, if not better. It had been given about a dozen performances in a quarter of a century, some of them with notable interpreters. Some sixteen months before, Gentleman George himself had been seen as Charles in a galaxy of travelling stars. Discrepancies in the newspaper reports indicate some last minute shifts in the cast. According to the *Republican* of September 7, the star on this occasion elected to play the more suitable role of Sir Peter, leaving Charles to Ludlow with Farren as Sir Oliver. But the review in the *Pennant* two days later commended the performances of Barrett in the first part and of Farren as Sir Peter. "They reminded us more of old times than anything we have witnessed for a long time." Sankey, originally slated for Moses, was apparently promoted to Sir Oliver, not with outstanding success, at least in the opinion of the critic. "Sankey wants *something* to complete his representation of a 'fine old English gentleman'— If we knew what it was we would tell him. One thing was evident—he was not easy in the part. He seemed to feel that he had undertaken rather too much. Sankey has talent, and will be an ornament to his profession—but let him, as far as possible, get his idea of characters *out* of the green room, which is undoubtedly the worst place in the world for a young actor to look for instruction or improvement." Unless there were further changes in the line-up, Mrs. Farren was the Lady Teazle, Conner the Joseph, Smith the Crabtree, and Mrs. Maynard the Mrs. Candour.

"The public is respectfully notified that the celebrated Tragedian, Mr. A. A. ADDAMS is engaged for one night, and will appear this evening as VIRGINIUS." So the managers informed the public on Tuesday morning, September 8. Whether or not Addams

really was engaged for one evening only is not revealed. He actually appeared five times under the aegis of Ludlow and Smith, and once at the Atheneum. Smith says in his diary that the tragedian filled an engagement of six nights with his firm and, of course, it is very possible that his figures are correct. He was advertised in the *Republican* to perform from the eighth through the twelfth, and there is no mention of any further appearances except the surprising one at the Atheneum on the nineteenth. I have, however, been able to find no paper printed on the sixteenth, and he may have acted again at Third and Olive on that date. Yet comments entered by Smith in his diary a short time later make me feel that that explanation is dubious.

According to the notices in the morning paper, his roles at the regular house were Virginius, Lear, Damon, Brutus (in Payne's play of that name), and Macbeth. In all these parts he had Mrs. Farren as his vis-a-vis. Despite the undoubted ire of his employers (to be explained later) he was given the best support the company afforded, except that, because of illness, Conner was missing from several casts. The latter played Icilius on the opening night, and was supposed to play Edgar and Pythias. The former part he may have filled; in the latter he was replaced by Maynard, who also undertook Macduff, a role which would certainly have fallen to his lot had he been well. In Knowles' tragedy Farren was the Dentatus, and Sankey the Numatorius. In *King Lear* Farren, Maynard, and Sankey were Kent, Edmund, and Albany respectively, with Mrs. Farren as Cordelia. Mrs. Maynard was assigned Calanthe in *Damon and Pythias,* and Tarquinia in *Brutus.* The Payne tragedy was the farewell benefit of "Paddy" Larkin, the star "kindly volunteering" for the occasion. One good turn deserving another, the Irish comedian volunteered for Hecate in *Macbeth,* a bit of casting less surprising in "the palmy days" than it would be today. Young Hamill was entrusted with Banquo. The Witches were none other than Smith, Farren, and Sankey, as lively a trio, surely, as ever danced upon the heath. "All the music of the Witches will be given," proclaimed the advertisements. Is it possible that this triumvirate sang? Or was the cast enlarged by three nattily clad "Singing Witches" as often happened? Of Addams' single perform-

ance in the other house, the only notice is to be found in the *Gazette* of September 18. "ADDAMS appears at the Atheneum tonight, in the character of Wm. Tell. Mr. Addams is too well known as an actor to require anything in his behalf from us." A nearby advertisement states that the occasion is to be Mrs. Newton's benefit.

Augustus A. Addams was a tragic figure off the stage as well as on. According to Dr. Odell, he "missed immortality by lack of energy and character," and he quotes the *Knickerbocker Magazine* of May, 1835, to the following effect: "Physically he is liberally endowed. His frame is well knit, and his port commanding. His features, too, are full of expression, and susceptible, in an eminent degree of sudden and powerful change. His voice also is deep and full."[20] Unfortunately, he resembled Edwin Forrest in appearance. According to James Murdoch, "He began to adopt the mannerisms of Mr. Forrest at the outset of his career, and fell into his mode so readily that any one hearing him, in ordinary conversation, without seeing him, could not possibly have told whether Mr. Forrest or Mr. Adams was the speaker."[21] Murdoch in his *The Stage* expresses the opinion that "had he relied on his own expressive intonation and quality of voice, instead of moulding himself after the fashion of another, he would have reached a still higher degree of excellence than that which, in the minds of many, made him a rival of Mr. Forrest."[22]

On September 10, two days after his opening as Virginius (which the paper says "created universal admiration"), the *Republican* observed that the Theatre had for a few nights been "patronized better than formerly" and expressed the hope that the managers would be "rewarded with good houses."

On the same day the *Pennant's* valuable critic reported that Addams' Virginius had "afforded the most unalloyed and, for many, unexpected pleasure. The chasteness of his conception—the beauty of his elocution—the depth and power of his style—formed a picture of intellectual greatness which can be seldom looked upon. Many who were predisposed to think that this gentleman's abilities have

[20]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 18.
[21]James Murdoch: *The Stage*, 348.
[22]*Ibid.*

been overrated, were most agreeably disappointed. In fact, Mr. A. made a *hit,* and has forever established himself in the favor of the St. Louis audience. . . ."

But the writer was better in the role of critic than in that of prophet. Monday there was a different tale to tell.

MACBETH. The chorusses in this play went off with unusual spirit Saturday evening. We have seldom been more highly gratified. [Just how gratified would Shakespeare have been with such ridiculous interpolations?] Of the playing, we *cannot* say much that is favorable, and therefore will say nothing. Mr. Addams, who appears to less advantage in this play than in almost any other, was, in many respects, so badly supported as to turn the performance into absolute burlesque. His 'Come in,' in a pretty considerable tall *sotto voce* to the Ghost of Banquo, was irresistibly ludicrous. Why could he not as easily have *imagined* his Ghostship to be there as an audience can imagine that the other persons on the stage are the only ones of hundreds present who can *not* see them.

Evidently the star, not finding "his Ghostship" on the stage, had called into the wings. The reason for this strange behavior we shall see shortly.

Nine days later Addams was performing in a third-rate establishment. At least part of the explanation may be gleaned from Smith's diary under date of October 8.

A. A. Addams lately performed an engagement of six nights at the St. Louis Theatre. This person, who can only be thought of now with a sort of loathing, *might* have been the rival of *Edwin Forrest* at this moment. I consider him a most confirmed drunkard & sot. . . . Addams attempts to imitate Forrest in all his movements, *on* & *off* the stage—but oh! how different are the two men! The one, by study, perseverance, industry, & correct conduct, has arrived at the head of his profession in this country, while the other, neglecting all the means which perfect a man in the profession of an actor, is groveling in drunkeness & filth—frequently in want of funds wherewith to pay his tavern bill.—For his benefit in St. Louis he personated Macbeth. At the conclusion of his performance he *staggered* into his Dressing Room, & throwing himself at full length upon the floor, "in his armour as he fought" he layed there until the following night, sleeping away the fumes of the whisky which he had taken in great quantities, during the performance—And this is one of our *American Actors!*

So much for Mr. Addams.

During his engagement, St. Louis audiences had not been sustained by tragic fare alone. Each evening had its afterpiece, each, with the exception of *The Robber's Wife* (which followed *Brutus*) being of the usual insubstantial quality. This depressing *opus* was used to round out the evening's festivities because the occasion was Larkin's benefit, and he wanted to play Larry O'Gig. The ever-obliging Mrs. Farren exchanged the Roman robes of Tullia for the less aesthetic raiment of Rose Redland. As an antidote for all the gloom, I presume, the audience was promised the last appearance of the "Hungry Singers," a song—"The Hunter's Signal Horn"—by Miss Morgan, and a "national song" called "Patrick's Day in America" by the *benefitee* himself. Of the other farces there is no reason to say more than that in *A Day in Paris* ("first time in two years") Mrs. Maynard played five characters, and that in *No Song, No Supper* Sol Smith was the Crop.

The star having departed, Mrs. Maynard took her benefit. The first piece was *The Hunchback* (the great vogue of which is today almost incomprehensible) with the heroine of the evening in the secondary role of Helen. Mrs. Farren was once more in her familiar place as Julia, a role associated for years with Fanny Kemble. Conner well again and back in the traces, was the Clifford, Farren the Master Walter, Sankey the Fathom, and Hamill the Milford. The entracte was devoted to a comic duet, "Rustic Courtship" by Mrs. Maynard and Mrs. Russell. The concluding selection was "a new Burletta," *Demoiselles, Prenez-Garde—Maidens, Beware*—with Mrs. Maynard in four roles.

Then came the horses.

Apparently they came, so far as the exchequer was concerned, to little purpose. "The fact was we were not complete in our equestrian department. Some of our best riders—Levi North, the Stones, and Lipmans—had not joined us yet, and did not until we reached New Orleans. Robinson, and his little boy, Jimmy, were favorites, but the rest were unpracticed and unskillful." This according to Ludlow.[28] John Robinson's small boy was subsequently rechristened "Master Hernandez" in order that he might impress the New

[28]Ludlow *Dramatic Life*, 526.

Orleans public as an exotic. Both managers claim credit for the inspiration, but Ludlow says Smith "tacked on" the first name *Juan.*[24] The latter describes him as a "wonderful child, not over eight years of age" and asserts that he "could execute the most difficult and dangerous equestrian feats, besides singing comic songs and acting children's parts on the stage."

In his brief account of the fall's equestrian activities, Ludlow never refers to "Mr. Lewellen" (Smith writes "Llewellen") or his Arabian horse, Timour. Yet it was these two whose names were blazoned forth in all the publicity, no mention of any sort being made of little Juan, *né* Jimmy. Master and steed had thrilled the St. Louis public two years before, and now were welcomed back hopefully, but manifestly proved to be disappointing. They opened on the fifteenth with *Mazeppa.* What happened the next evening I cannot say, because, as has already been noted, no papers seem to have been published on that day. The Tuesday *Republican* announced that on Wednesday the opening melodrama would be performed for the last time. Performed it probably was, but certainly not for the last time, inasmuch as repetitions were advertised for the nineteenth and (Acts I and II only) and the twentieth, the latter for Lewellen's benefit. In the meantime the couple were starred in *Timour the Tartar, El Hyder, Conancheotah* or *The Indian's War Horse* "written expressly for Mr. LEWELLEN," by what author is not revealed.

The stage effects, according to the *Republican* of September 15, were characterized by the usual sensationalism.

> In Act 1st Mazeppa is condemned to be lashed to the back of the UNTAMED STEAD, who is released amidst the glare of torches, savage shouts and beacon fires, and is seen pursuing his furious course amongst the almost inaccessible rocky heights of Poland, constructed by platforms from the stage to extreme height of the Theatre.
>
> In Act 2nd, the descent of the horse, with the victim still lashed to his back, into the plains of Tartary.

This is but a modest sample. Moreover, there was no economizing in the casting, Conner, Smith, the Farrens, and the Maynards being among those who appeared in supporting roles. The melodramas,

[24] *Ibid.*, 525; Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 155.

moreover, were accompanied by the usual curtain-raisers and afterpieces, in one of which, *The Mummy,* on his benefit night, Lewellen took part as Toby. In *Conancheotah* Huron was enacted by Schinotti, presumably one J. F. Schinotti who had a year or two before played minor roles, sung songs, and painted scenery for the managers.

Lewellen's departure was followed after a hiatus of two evenings by a return engagement of Charles Eaton. The two intervening performances were in no way sensational except, perhaps, for the premieres of two new plays. The first of the open nights was devoted to a repeat of *Ambrose Gwinette* and the "first time" of *Mr. and Mrs. White.* This little afterpiece, which was sometimes labelled *Mr. and Mrs. Peter White,* and sometimes just *Peter White,* is referred to by Dr. Odell as a "long-lived farce,"[25] but the author is not identified. The advertisement in the *Republican* (September 23) does not claim, oddly enough, that this was its first local performance, but I have come across no reference to a previous one. Possibly it had been done before, masquerading under still another name. The role of Peter was played by "Mr. Sanders (from the Boston Theatres, his first appearance)" (Clapp in his *Record of the Boston Stage* mentions Saunders who played Gaspard with Forrest in *The Lady of Lyons* at the Tremont Theatre in May, 1838). Farren was seen as Col. Pepper, Maynard as Frank Brown, Mrs. Maynard as Mrs. White, Mrs. Farren as the Widow White, and Mrs. Russell as Kitty Clover.

The second novelty, acted on September 24, was obviously intended to take advantage of the Presidential campaign, then at its height. It was announced in the *Republican* as *The Parole of Honor* or *The Youthful Days of Harrison,* "founded on events in the early history of the Western country." To the authorship of this piece, no doubt a patriotic melodrama, no clue is offered. It is not included (at least under either of these names) in Dr. Arthur Hobson Quinn's list of American plays. Nor does Dr. Odell give its authorship. It was, however, no impromptu effusion because the production referred to by the latter had taken place in New York in February, 1838.[26] The St. Louis cast was made up as follows: Capt. W.

[25]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 144.
[26]*Ibid.,* IV, 223.

H. Harrison, Conner; Gen. Wayne, Hamill; Gen. Carleton, Farren; Gen. Burgoyne, Johnson; Sampson Heartly, Sankey; Corporal Slink, Sanders; Jane, Mrs. Farren; Ruth, Mrs. Russell. The emotions of the audience having been patriotically stirred, Mr. Sanders obliged with a comic song, and Mrs. Maynard "sustained" five characters in *A Day in Paris*.

Eaton's engagement, which commenced on September 25, was for five nights, plus his benefit and also Maynard's, two evenings later, for which he "volunteered." He opened as Richard III, a part in which, according to advance notice in the *Gazette* (September 25), "He reveals to you a startling conception of the gloomy tyrant." Unfortunately, no explanation is given of the unusual features of his interpretation. His support included Conner as Richmond, Mrs. Farren as the Queen (no doubt, Elizabeth Woodville), and Mrs. Maynard as Lady Anne. The afterpiece was *The Two Gregories* with Sankey, Sanders, Mrs. Farren, and Mrs. Russell. "SANDERS," reported the editor of the *Gazette*, is a 'rare bird.' His comic acting is the best we have had for a Jew's age."

Saturday evening, the star not only enacted Shylock, but also gave his "imitations of distinguished performers." With him in *The Merchant of Venice* were Conner (Bassanio), Ludlow (Gratiano), Maynard (Antonio), Sankey (Gobbo), Mrs. Farren (Portia), Mrs. Maynard (Nerissa), and Miss Morgan (Jessica).

The correspondent of the *Pennant* was on September 29 as often explicit, and, hence, his comments are valuable. He approved of Eaton's work but he did have suggestions. "Let him acquire a little more readiness and ease in the *quiet*, commonplace parts of the dialogue, and preserve untouched and untamed, the fire and energy of the others—and he may hold up his head above the highest." For most of the others too he had words of commendation, but Sankey and Sanders elicited a cry for mercy. "For Heaven's sake, gentlemen comedians, leave grimace, and buffoonery, and the making up of ugly faces, and the describing in the air of sundry unmeaning capers with the legs, to the clown of a circus—'tis his vocation, not yours."

The *Republican* found his mimicry "very extraordinary." His subjects were Forrest as Spartacus, Booth as Iago, Kean as Sir

Giles, Vandenhoff as the Stranger, Addams as Virginius, Pelby as Hamlet, Charles Mason as St. Pierre, and, by way of humorous contrast, "Daddy Rice" as William Tell. This assortment disposed of, Conner repeated his William Henry Harrison.

Eaton's third appearance (on Monday, September 28) was as Jaffier in *Venice Preserved,* Conner playing Pierre, and, of course, Mrs. Farren, Belvidera. The next morning the *Republican* observed that "Mr. Eaton's popularity is gaining strength, he is certainly an actor of high merit. His favorite characters are some of Shakespeare's most difficult ones, and he always sustains them with credit to himself. The company at present is excellent—never better—they can make a strong cast in any piece they undertake. It is true we would like to see some old familiar faces on the stage again, for instance, old Joe—but for the loss of him we have Mr. Conner, a favorite with everybody, and then there is Mr. & Mrs. Maynard and several others, making a first rate stock company. Under the existing arrangements the Theatre is not patronized quite as well as we would like to see it, though the houses have been much better of late than formerly." Tuesday evening the play was *Othello* with the visitor as Iago, Conner as the Moor, Mrs. Maynard as Desdemona, and Mrs. Farren as Emilia, a rather surprising arrangement so far as the two ladies were concerned. Wednesday's feature was Shiel's *The Apostate,* which cheerful drama of the Inquisition St. Louis audiences had had no opportunity to enjoy for at least nine years. On this evening in 1840, Eaton assumed the role of Pescara, with Conner as Hemaya, Farren as Malec, Sankey as Alvarez, and Mrs. Farren as Florinda. To "conclude the entertainments" the management revived *Mischief Making,* a farce which had been out of sight since 1837, with Saunders (he had now acquired a *u*) as Nicholas Dovetail, and Mrs. Maynard as Madame Manette, "the French Washerwoman" of the sub-title. The advertisements announced that "Curtain will rise for the remainder of the season, at quarter past 7."

Being a true tragedian, Eaton selected three acts of *Hamlet* for his benefit, October 1. Ludlow, switching from his wonted comedy to the sombre, donned the armor of the Ghost, the role almost invariably considered in those days the second part and usually played by the "heavy man." Conner, who, in the presence of a star, ordinarily

descended to that category, is, oddly enough, not listed among the participants in this part of the bill. Farren was the Polonius. His wife played Ophelia, and her mother assumed the crown and the sins of Gertrude. After dying in the sables of the Prince of Denmark, Eaton returned to the stage to give an address he had written and dedicated to the firemen of St. Louis. In order that the audience might not feel cheated, he added an act of *Julius Caesar* for good measure, playing the "lean and hungry" Cassius to the Antony of Conner and the Brutus of Maynard. But even that was not enough. "The entertainments of the evening" were at long last brought to a close with *Sylvester Daggerwood* and the popular imitations. This program must surely have lasted between three and four hours. The *Pennant* of October 3 estimated the house at "not less than $700."

This *mélange* wrote *finis* to Eaton's pre-arranged program, but two nights later, being still on deck, he agreed to lend a helping hand to Maynard on his evening and "obliged with" his version of Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts,* the beneficiary assuming the juvenile lead, Wellborn. Massinger's tragedy was followed by another piece by an unidentified local author. This was described in the *Republican* (October 3), as "a new Drama founded on the novel of the same name called CAPTAIN KYD, OR THE WIZZARD OF THE SEA written by a gentleman of this city": Mark Meredith, Maynard; Robert Lester, Conner; Old Meredith, Sankey; Father Naujan, Farren; Catharine Bellamont, Mrs. Maynard; Elspy, Mrs. Farren; Grace, Mrs. Wright. Unfortunately, so far as I know, no critic undertook to pass on the merits of this work.

Probably on the day after this premiere, Eaton left St. Louis, heading downstream on the *General Pratte.* Smith was also on board and, as has been noted before, in no cheerful mood. The entry in his Diary under the date of October 5 (the same in which he expresses himself concerning Barrett and Addams) opens with his views on his latest star.

C. H. Eaton, tragedian, is with us, having just finished an engagement at our Theatre in St. Louis. He is certainly a deserving actor—personates his characters *naturally*—but the *curse of our age, dissipation,* renders him what we term 'uncertain'.

It will be recalled that before many months had passed, this same curse had rendered him dead.

It was not, however, only the convivial habits of his stars that were preying on Sol's mind. He had other worries.

Had a serious misunderstanding with my partner, Mr. Ludlow, previous to leaving St. Louis. I consider him, after mature consideration, as an extremely *selfish man;* when his own individual interests are concerned, he is not at all particular in making all other interests bend to his;—He occupies nearly every room in the Theatre, to save renting a house, or to secure the *chance* of renting out his own, (which is unoccupied,) depriving the gentlemen of the orchestra of a place for retiring between the acts (converting the Music Room into a kitchen, & filling the house with smoke almost constantly,) eats breakfast & Dinner (with a large family) in the *Green-Room,* permits his servants to go through the house while the audience are in it—uses the front Manager's Room & the Director's Room, for lodging Rooms & the Dressing Rooms for hen coops—in short, monopolizes nearly the whole Theatre for his own individual benefit. [The next few lines have been scratched out, and the writing is indecipherable.]. . . . and yet when I proposed that we should withhold from a woman who was running away from us, her salary until it should be due on Monday morning—(three other boats being ready to start for the same port,) he flew into a terrible passion & pretended to think that it would be an act of injustice not to anticipate the time of payment!!

I record my feelings on this matter, so that hereafter I may ascertain whether any change takes place in them. I cannot help thinking my partner is guilty of the grossest affectation of honesty in this case, and, as *trifles* frequently determine important matters, I prophesy that this very *small matter* will lead to a dissolution of our business partnership. One thing is certain. *My* wish is for a dissolution—even at a great pecuniary loss. I am no hypocrite—& I cannot assume a friendship which I do not feel.

Whether or not Smith's feelings did change or merely fluctuate from time to time, we can to-day only guess. He was a warm-hearted man, and I suspect that when no particular provocation existed, he was prone to forget his irritations or at least to thrust them into the background. His diaries, however, provide ample evidence that he could not always keep them out of his mind, and every now and then the desire for a break is expressed. The question of Ludlow's use of the Theatre arose at least once more. Writ-

ing his partner from New Orleans the following spring, Smith said: "In the utmost kindness I say to you—*don't live in the Theatre with your family.* I have not the least doubt it vitiates the Insurance, having cooking done, except in the parts set apart for restaurants & as expressed in the policies. I imagine this advice of mine is unnecessary, as I suppose you have (for your own sake) made other arrangements. There are other reasons, which you may guess at."[27] Ludlow's diaries reveal that he too was unhappy in the partnership.

Three evenings before starting for the South, Smith made his last appearance of the season, as Ali Baba in *The Forty Thieves.* It was the last time for Miss Morgan too, Cogia being the final role of her St. Louis career. Conner played Hassarac, Saunders Mustapha, Mrs. Farren Morgiana, and Mrs. Maynard Ardinelle. It would no doubt be inexact to say that *Laughing* or *The Elixir of Life* (one of the various aliases applied to *Laugh When You Can*) served as a curtain-raiser, but at least it did occupy the first half of the program, Ludlow playing Gossamer, another of his favorite parts. Miss Morgan was the Emily, and then sang her last song on the St. Louis stage, "The Time When We Went Gipsying." In *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *Captain Kyd,* the next evening, the roles which would normally have been hers fell to Mrs. Wright.

The last star of the fall season, Dan Marble, not beginning his engagement until Tuesday, *Tortesa* and *Captain Kyd* were repeated. *Tortesa,* which had not been given since spring, was presented with the same principals as before except that Mrs. Maynard replaced the absent Mrs. Bateman.

[27] Sol Smith to N. M Ludlow, May 3, 1841. Smith does not identify the actress who was the cause of his quarrel with Ludlow, but it was probably Miss Morgan, since her name ceased to appear in the advertisements just before this time. Of course, the absence of her name from the bills actually proves nothing, inasmuch as not all participants were listed in the publicity, and she had not been mentioned consistently. Miss Stanard's name had also disappeared, but not just at this time. The following May 12, Smith, writing Ludlow about the actors he has engaged for the St. Louis summer season, reports that Dick Russell has "told many persons he was going to the West Indies with his wife." The name of the wife is given and, although the handwriting is very bad, looks like "Miss Morgan." Afterwards he married a young actress known professionally as "Miss Sylvia" (Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 645).

Danforth Marble was one of a group of comedians who specialized in native American characters, others being James H. Hackett, George ("Yankee") Hill, Josh Silsbee, and Thomas D. ("Jim Crow") Rice. As Hackett liked to try his hand at tragedy, Marble at first aspired to romantic heroes, but he soon discovered that, like Hill, he had a knack for comic characterization, especially of the Yankee type, and, having begun with recitations between the plays of the evening, he soon blossomed forth as a regular comedian, and before long had begun the accumulation of the fortune which, with true New England thrift, he put by against a rainy day and which, when he died of cholera in 1849, he left his widow. "In those days," says Joe Jefferson, "the stage New Englander was acted and dressed in a most extravagant manner. I remember seeing Marble play, and his costume was much after the present caricature of Uncle Sam, minus the stars, but glorying in the stripes."[28] Such, no doubt, was Sam Patch, the character in which the favorite returned to St. Louis for his third engagement in a year. The piece was *Sam Patch in France,* a sequel to *Sam Patch,* one of his earlier successes. But as he was not wanting in vigor, he followed this on the same evening with William in *Black Eyed Susan.* In the cast of the last we find the first mention of Mrs. Mueller, who came on the scene as Dolly Mayflower.

Marble certainly did not idle away his days and nights while in St. Louis. In a little more than a week he appeared in no less than twelve parts, some of which departed from his usual Yankee pattern. The performances accounted for the nights, and most of the days must of necessity have been given over to rehearsals, since these were not stock pieces in the repertory of the company. As it was, it is unlikely that any of them had the benefit of more than one rehearsal. The oddly assorted characters he played included: Sam Patch in *Sam Patch in France,* twice; William in *Black Eyed Susan,* twice; Philip in *Luke the Laborer;* Jacob Jewsharp in *The Yankee in Time;* Soloman Swop in *Jonathan in England,* Sampson Hardhead, "a Ranting Rousing Kentuckian" in *The Gamecock of the Wilderness,* three times; Tom Cringle in the play of the same name; Deuteronomy Dutiful in *The Vermonter;* Jonathan Ploughboy in *The Forest*

[28]The *Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson,* 20.

Rose; Uzzial Putnam in *The Times that Tried Us;* and Jack Junk in *The Floating Beacon.* In addition to these roles which he performed entire, he also gave for his two benefits single acts or scenes from other plays, for instance the courting scene from "the original *Sam Patch*"; the first act of *Born to Good Luck* or *The Ploughman Made Lord,* and the last act of *Therese, The Orphan of Geneva,* John Howard Payne's adaptation of a French original by Victor Ducange, which saw him as the villainous Carwin. The first benefit, which occurred on October 12 especially featured *The Times that Tried Us* or *Yankees in 1777,* "for the first time in any Theatre, a play written expressly for Mr. Marble, by H. P. Conway, Esq."[39] Two mornings later the *Republican* announced the second. "On the occasion of Mr. Marble's benefit night before last, there was such a crowd as had not been there for two years previous—and we are not sure that there was ever a better house." The editor goes on to say that the new play "is first rate, and was well received." "We are happy to learn that Mr. Marble has been reengaged for a few nights." This seems to have been a genuine, not a pre-arranged re-engagement. The *Republican* of October 13 announced for that evening a Marble-less bill, but the next evening *Black Eyed Susan* and *The Forest Rose* (with Ludlow as Young Wilding in *The Liar* sandwiched in between) was advertised as the second night of the re-engagement. There must have been some quick work. Furthermore, it is evident that the management did not lean too heavily on the publicity in the morning paper.

It was lucky for Ludlow and Smith that the St. Louis theatregoers liked Marble, but certainly the popularity of his contributions does not speak highly for their taste unless we are to assume, as we must often do, that the art or skill of the player counted for everything, and the merit of his vehicle for nothing. *Black Eyed Susan* is of its kind a pretty good sentimental piece, and *Therese* is a cleverly contrived melodrama, but the Yankee plays are little, if anything, more than trash. In this connection a comment of Dr. Odell's

[39]There is no recognizable reference to this play in either Quinn or Odell. The correct initials of the author are H. J., not H. P. He served as prompter at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, and Dr. Quinn names two plays from his pen, *The Champions of Freedom* and *Dred.* (A *History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War,* 282 and 289.)

upon *The Vermonter* may be pertinent at this point. This *opus* from the pen of Cornelius A. Logan was usually known either as *The Vermont Wool Dealer* or *The Yankee Traveller*. "How the piece could ever have pleased is a mystery; but we must not forget the all-devastating vogue of Yankee plays when this one was produced. Perhaps nothing about it is more amazing than the cool appropriation of the old device of The Forest Rose, whereby Jonathan Ploughboy induces a silly ass to run away with a negress veiled; that trick is played on Deuteronomy Dutiful."[30] What is more, Marble gave both in St. Louis during the course of one engagement.

In his various performances Marble was, to use the familiar phrase of the day, "supported by the full strength of the company." But the pace he set was apparently too much for the ladies, and a general shuffling of leading roles resulted to an unusual degree. Of necessity Mrs. Farren surrendered for the time-being her legitimate priority. The reason almost certainly was the fact that there were so many different parts to be played opposite the star that it would have been almost impossible for one woman to assimilate and enact them all in a week or ten days. Because of the absence of any record of the events of October 13, that particular evening cannot be accounted for. On every other evening of Marble's engagement, she appeared and on all but one (October 8) she played at least one lead. To her lot fell the following principal roles: Victorine in *Sam Patch in France,* Susan in *Black Eyed Susan,* Elizabeth in *Tom Cringle,* Melissa in the scene from *Sam Patch,* and Marietta in *The Floating Beacon.* In addition to these, she played seconds—I presume shorter parts—as Nance Butler in *The Gamecock of the Wilderness* and Julia in *The Times that Tried Us,* the heroines of both pieces, Clara and Rose respectively, being assigned to Mrs. Maynard. This lady headed the list also in *The Forest Rose.* Mrs. Wright had her chances at greatness in *Jonathan in England* and *The Vermonter.* Poor Mrs. Mueller achieved no leads, but her name is listed in the casts of four pieces, Mrs. Russell's in three. Of course, there is no reason to conclude that these ladies devoted the other evenings to

[30]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 370. The same device had been employed at least nineteen years before by Alphonso Wetmore in *The Pedlar,* produced in St. Louis in the Thespian Theatre.

leisure pastimes. The advertisements were neither complete nor consistent in naming the participants in an evening's program.

Of the men, Conner was called upon to exert himself on five evenings, as Luke the Laborer, Sir Larry McMurragh in *Jonathan in England,* Black Walter in *Tom Cringle,* Adam Cotton in *The Times that Tried Us,* and Fontaine in the *Therese* selection. Nor were his associates enjoying a holiday. There was work—plenty of work—for all hands.

I think everybody must have been tired when the ebullient Dan, together with his gaily gotten gains, boarded the steamboat for Cincinnati. But there was no rest for the weary actors and actresses he left behind him. On the next evening Conner took his benefit in tragedy and comedy. The former was Nat Lee's *Alexander the Great,* better known as *The Rival Queens.* Of course, he played the conquering, but sadly bedevilled, hero, and the Queens were Mary Ann Farren (Roxana) and Mrs. Maynard (Statira). Farren took the part of Clytus, Hamill that of Hephestion, and Maynard that of Lysimachus. Then came the comedy, the St. Louis premiere of "a Dramatic sketch, in one act, from Dickens' (Boz) celebrated work of the same name called Nicholas Nickelby or Dotheboys Hall." Conner was Mr. Mantilini with Mrs. Farren as his better half. Nicholas himself fell to Maynard, Squeers to Saunders, and Newman Noggs to Sankey. The ladies turned out in full force, Mrs. Maynard as Kate Nickleby, Mrs. Russell as her garrulous mother, Mrs. Mueller as Mrs. Squeers, and Mrs. Wright as Miss Knaggs. At the end of Conner's request for the support of his friends as it is printed in the *Republican,* appears this additional plea: "Wanted for the part of Nicholas Nickleby, FIFTY boys. Apply at the box office at the Theatre." This last does not exactly make sense, but its intention was doubtless understood. It is certainly to be regretted that no one thought it worth while to write an account of this performance.

The season now sped rapidly on to the close. Most of the pieces offered were standard fare, including such "war horses" as *Richelieu, The Lady of Lyons,* and *Tortesa,* with more or less familiar curtain raisers and afterpieces, but there were a few novelties. At least the names were new in the experience of St. Louis; Ludlow was not averse to presenting wolves in sheep's clothing. Four plays which

to all seeming were first-timers were *Kill or Cure* (October 19), *Will Watch, the Bold Smuggler* (October 23), *Robert Macaire* and *Uncle John* (both, October 24). Only one of these can be considered of any importance. This was *Robert Macaire* or *The Auberge des Adrets,* which was considered worthy of Conner's steel. He played the title-role with Saunders as Jacques Strop, and Sankey himself as Germeuil. Mrs. Farren, safely restored to leads, was Marie, and Mrs. Wright, Clementine. The most popular play of the last fortnight was no novelty, but *Paul Jones, the Pilot of the German Ocean.* This melodrama was offered first on October 17, and repeated on the three following evenings as well as on the twenty-eighth. "At the conclusion of the first act, A FULL RIGGED SHIP will appear—descend the whole length of the stage, tack and stand up again, presenting a correct picture of a ship in a storm, beating off a lee shore."[31] The cast included: Conner, Long Tom Coffin; Ludlow, Boroughcliffe; Maynard, Barnstable; Saunders, Sergeant Drill; and Mrs. Maynard, Kate Plowden.

The outstanding event of the closing week was the return of "Old Joe" Cowell to the stage of the St. Louis Theatre, which occurred on the twenty-eighth. It is extremely unlikely that the comedian can have entertained any great affection for the managers who had jettisoned him and his family after printing their names in small type. But no one (except Ludlow) seems ever to have resented Mary Ann Farren or had any occasion to do so. Old Joe was obviously no exception, since it was for her benefit that he consented to reappear. The bill is described in the *Republican* published that morning.

". . . Mr. Cowell—'Old Joe' and Capt. Jack of the 'Shades' [a saloon] have volunteered their services for the occasion. Who that has seen the quizzical features and comic gestures of Cowell, on the stage, can resist this last opportunity of seeing him again?" The article goes on to say, "If we can afford to give an actor $1000 for a few nights entertainment, we certainly should be willing to give equally as good a benefit to one who has been successfully exerting herself for years, for our amusement. . . ."

The actor who drew a thousand dollars was undoubtedly Marble. The advertisement refers also to "an Irish gentleman of this city"

[31] *Missouri Republican,* October 17, 1840.

who will appear, but fails to identify him. All three volunteers were seen in *The Review,* which closed the proceedings of the evening, Cowell as Caleb Quotem, the Captain as Deputy Bull, and the mysterious Irishman as Loony McTwolter. Between the play and the farce Dick Russell contributed his mite toward his sister's cause by singing "The Western Steamboatmen (by the author of Clinton Bradshaw)," and Mrs. Wright and Mr. Lavette danced a Russian *Pas de Deux.* Ludlow asserts that Mrs. Farren's benefit was "very fine."[32] In this respect it appears to have been the exception since he says that those of most of the others proved "to be no benefits at all; but they lost nothing, for the management did not require them to make up any sum they might fall short in, of the expense of the night." He was probably correct in this, although he was certainly incorrect when he came to naming the beneficiaries.

There was, however, more due the Farrens than any benefit, no matter how good, could produce. "Finding our firm becoming more and more involved in debt," writes Smith, "and being considerably behind with the salaries of Mr. and Mrs. Farren, I proposed to let them have a beautiful building site I had purchased from Henry Chouteau, consisting of about three acres, on which I had intended to build a home for myself, if I should ever have the means to do so. They accepted, and the deeds were made out in Mrs. Farren's name, and a clause inserted in the deed of trust to secure the deferred payments, that any debts due to them by the firm for salary and benefits should go on as so much on the payment. This turned out to be a good bargain for Mrs. Farren, and she richly deserves her good fortune, for a better woman does not walk the earth."[33]

In listing those who sought to better their circumstances through the medium of benefits, Ludlow overlooked one, "Mr. Whitaker, the one armed door keeper and bill sticker of the Theatre." I find no record that Mueller was permitted to seek to improve his finances in this manner, but the privilege was extended to this humble employee, who in the *Republican* of October 27 "respectfully reminds his brother cripples that now is the time to extend a HAND to aid him, as they have previously promised, and those who have no hand to extend, are expected to put their best *foot foremost* on the occasion.

[32]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 530.
[33]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 151.

Go it ye cripples." The advertisement looks as if it might have been written by Mr. Whitaker himself, for in announcing the program, it says: "on which occasion will be played the grand melo-drama, interspersed with chorusses, called MASANIELLO, OR THE DUMB GIRL OF PORTIA." He seems to have been thinking of *The Merchant of Venice* and so substituted the name of the lady of Belmont for the correct *Portici*. It will be noted that the piece is described as a "melo-drama," and was probably, therefore, an adaption of Scribe's play, and not Auber's celebrated opera.[34] In this October performance the title role was assumed by Conner, and that of Fenella, his voiceless sister, by Mrs. Farren. Mrs. Maynard was the Elvira, and other important parts were taken by Mrs. Russell, Farren, and Saunders. The evening closed with Mrs. Russell and Sankey in *The Midnight Hour*.

The last evening of the season was dedicated to a grand "complimentary benefit" for Conner "as a testimony of the high esteem in which he is held by this community, both as a GENTLEMAN and as an ACTOR." Again Captain Jack and the anonymous Irishman were on hand to contribute their bits, and when the curtain fell after *Richelieu* and *The Wags of Windsor*, so far as the established company was concerned, 1840 became history. Ludlow promptly led his cohorts South, at least those who had not preceded him.

The departure of the regular players did not quite round off the local theatrical activities of the year. The *Republican* of December 9 announces the opening of a "Dramatic Saloon" in the Museum at Second and Market Streets by two gentlemen named Koch and Riley. Brown's *History of the American Stage* contains a very brief note concerning one Henry J. Riley, who may—or may not—have been the man. "Born in Liverpool, Eng., in 1801. Made his American *debut* Oct. 5, 1830, at Holliday Street Theatre, Baltimore, as Othello. Died in St. Louis, Mo., July 30, 1841."[35] Koch

[34] *Masaniello* was first performed in St. Louis in 1825, three years before the premiere of the opera in Paris. Although the leading roles were then taken by singers, the piece obviously cannot have been Auber's celebrated work. It would seem likely that, as was so often done in those days, songs were interpolated at strategic points. See Smith *Theatrical Management* 63.

[35] P. 314.

has left behind him a much more enduring record. In an article in *Science* he is identified by M. F. Ashley Montagu as Albert C. Koch, a "fossil hunter and proprietor of a museum in St. Louis, Missouri. Koch made a living by exhibiting his fossil collections all over America, in the British Isles and Germany, and by selling to museums. He was greatly respected by his contemporaries, and tribute to his scientific honesty was paid by no less a person than Richard Owen, the great English comparative anatomist."[86] Mr. Montagu goes on to say that, later, attempts were made to discredit Koch by men who did not bother to check his findings, but that his "claims have since been substantiated by similar ones elsewhere. His *Mastodon giganteum* was purchased by the British Museum."

Here we find Messrs. Koch and Riley in St. Louis anticipating by six months or more the opening of Moses Kimball's celebrated Boston Museum, and it was even longer before the latter dared to give real plays in his establishment.[87] The theory underlying the building of these museums was that many good people who would hesitate to be seen entering or leaving a structure which brazenly bore the accursed name of *theatre* might be lured onto the premises if only that fatal name were not associated with them and if an aura of respectability were cast over the whole enterprise by the presence in the lobby or elsewhere of mummies, stuffed birds, and prehistoric skeletons. In Boston the scheme proved successful perhaps beyond the hopes of the proprietors, but St. Louisans were less strict, and, while the museums remained on the scene, they soon settled down to functioning *in propria persona* except for occasional exhibitions of strength or magic.

But this winter the enterprising pair essayed to fill the vacuum left by the departure of the regulars. The opening bill was made up of *Nature and Philosophy* and *The Loan of a Lover* with the Trial Scene from *The Merchant of Venice* tucked neatly in between. In this last Riley himself assumed the gabardine of Shylock with a Mrs. Dyke as Portia, a Mrs. Lake as Nerissa, Schinotti (who had not accompanied Ludlow down the river) as the Duke, Dyke as Antonio,

[86] *Science*, N. S., Vol. 95, (1942), p. 380. For a detailed account of Koch and his varied activities see John Francis McDermott, "Dr. Koch's Wonderful Fossils," *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin*, IV (1948), 233-256.

[87] Claire McGlinchee: *The First Decade of the Boston Museum*, 38.

E S. CONNER

AS PIZARRO

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

Theater
Thursday Morning
Mr. H. H. Hamill, Oct 16th 1845.

Sir

We are under the painful necessity of informing you that your appearing on the Stage last night in a State of inebriety in the Cancells all Engagement between you & us according to the 31st article of the Rules & Regulations of our Theaters - & in accordance with that article, we now give you notice (one week) that your Services will not be required after paid you by us after the night of the 24th inst.

Yours
Ludlow & Smith

P.S. Should you prefer leaving at the end of our present theatrical week (on Sunday next) by informing us this day to that effect you will be permitted so to do -

L & S.

PAGE FROM LUDLOW AND SMITH LETTER BOOK
(Courtesy of the Missouri Historical Society)

Lake as Gratiano, and Davis as Bassanio. The casts of the two short farces were made up of the same persons, who were definitely not actors of any distinction. Mr. Hunt in his *The Nashville Theatre, 1830-40* records occasional appearances by Riley, the Dykes, and a Davis, almost certainly (except possibly the last-named) the same persons. On the subject of the Dykes we are not without further enlightenment. The previous spring Ludlow had received from his partner a letter which reads in part as follows:

Cairo Friday 1 o'clock May 29, 1840

. . . There is a strolling company here, just arrived in a flat-boat headed by a Mr. Dyke—commonly called *Daddy Dyke,* from the fact that he is the reputed father of 76 children. . . . I am told that Mrs. Dyke plays Mrs. Haller & dances the slack wire very well. Mr. D. informed me he was wending his way to St. Louis, where he intended to take an engagement. If he gets one, he will probably have to "take" it, indeed, for, if I am not mistaken, the business at St. Louis will not justify any increase of the Dramatic Company at present.

Among the up-turnings of Mr. Hunt's spade is the following comment on the artistry of "Daddy's" better half (who never seems to have been honored with the corresponding soubriquet of "Mammy") culled from the Nashville *Republican Banner* on December 24, 1838, while she was supporting Junius Brutus Booth in the Tennessee capital: "Mrs. Dyke has a good voice—but she fails in managing it and moderating its tones properly. She also has a good figure. But she rises upon her toes and totters too much when speaking."[88]

The advertisement for the opening performance states that admission to "all parts of the saloon" was fifty cents. Two more bills were announced before the end of the year. For December 10 were promised *Raising the Wind, Old King Cole,* and *The Lady and the Devil.* Some interesting data were furnished.

No ladies will be admitted unaccompanied by gentlemen.
Good fires and a retiring room have been arranged for visitors of the Saloon.
The curtain will rise positively every evening at 7 o'clock.

[88]Hunt: *The Nashville Theatre,* 68.

No colored persons can be admitted.
The Museum is open from 9 o'clock A.M. till 6 P.M. when the dramatic saloon will open.

If performances were given, as the notice implies, every evening, they have left no trace behind them. The only other bill referred to in the press is that of December 11 when *The Warlock of the Glen, Punchinello,* and *The Spectre Bridegroom* made up the program.

Here endeth the record for 1840.

V

ASSORTED ENTERTAINMENTS

Spring of 1841

As was noted in the last chapter, the month of December, 1840, had seen Messrs. Koch and Riley offering dramatic entertainment in their museum at Second and Market. How many performances they gave cannot be determined; at all events, the papers mentioned none after December 11. Apparently, but not certainly, their establishment remained dark from that date until January 20, when it was re-opened under the aegis of one W. S. McPherson. The *Republican* of that day published a card in which he announced that he "has purchased the Museum, and fitted it up in a handsome comfortable style." The cast of the play with which he said that he would re-open the premises on that same evening shows that he had taken over more than the building, for in the list appear such familiar names as those of Dyke, Mrs. Dyke, Miss Dyke, Davis, and Schinotti. But Riley and Lake appear to have moved on to other scenes.[1] In their places we find a J. R. Darrow, who took over the leads, Linden, Wallace ("Walice" in the *Republican*), Langdon, Kean, and Herbert ("Herburt in the *Republican*). Who these men were I can no more than surmise. With two possible exceptions, I have found no mention of them anywhere. In 1830 in the old Salt House Theatre in St. Louis, a man by the name of Langton had called journalistic ridicule down on his head by shedding a perfect Niagara of tears as George Barnwell; newspaper spelling being what it was in those days, this may well have been the lachrymose gentleman back again after a decade.[2] As for Herbert, Mr. Hunt notes that in 1837 a "Master Herbert" had impressed the citizens of Nashville in such Shakespearean roles as Iago.[3] As he was at that time said

[1]Lake would seem to have gone to Ludlow and Smith. On May 1 the latter wrote his partner from New Orleans. "Then Lake cut up a caper, and did not go up to the Circus—some difficulty with Robinson, I kicked him out of the back door, & sent him about his business in double quick time." The next day he wrote: "I send you Lake's Engt. so that if you think proper to do anything with him, you can do so."

[2]Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier*, 113.

[3]Hunt: "The Nashville Theatre," 61 and 63.

to be all of twelve years old, he would now, of course, be fifteen or sixteen, and I am inclined to suspect that he was the same person.

In the early months of 1841 theatricals were faring none too well in the United States. On January 12 the *Republican* reported that the famous Park Theatre in New York had called off its scheduled performance on a recent Saturday evening, because only one person had turned up to see the play.[4] Yet McPherson was able at least to keep his head above water until March 2. Indeed, until February 12 he seems to have given a performance every evening except Sunday. I have found no advertisement for any entertainment on January 29, but that omission may have been due to some slip. The *Republican* regularly displayed advertisements. For some reason the Museum was closed on the twelfth, eighteenth, and nineteenth, and there were at least no references to any activity between the thirteenth and the eighteenth. On the twentieth, however, and again on March 2, the notices reappeared.

Somehow or other, the manager was able also to repeat some of his plays a number of times. *The Castle Spectre,* with which he opened his campaign, achieved four performances, as did also *Venice Preserved* and *The Robber's Wife. Family Jars, Lovers' Quarrels,* and *The Falls of Clyde* scored three. Other pieces in the repertoire were *The Woodman's Hut, The Spectre Bridegroom, The Painter's Daughter, The Cobbler's Daughter, The Hunter of the Alps, Intrigue, The Day after the Wedding, The Bath Road Inn, The Lady and the Devil, Douglas, Pizarro, Libertines Deceived,* and *Ambrose Gwinett.* Not exactly weighty fare, but little beneath the level of most contemporary theatres of good repute.

In his memoirs Smith devotes a few lines to a popular but dubious managerial custom. "Managers of modern times," he writes, "have hit upon a model mode of making out their bills, which, in effect, gives an agreeable variety to the announcements, without in reality making much change in the performances. Old farces are presented with new titles, by which very simple means a half dozen pieces are made to run through a whole season."[5] The effectiveness of this

[4]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 451. On January 8 Simpson closed the Park Theatre for a few nights, reopening on the fourteenth for concerts only. There is no mention of the audience of one.

[5]Smith. *Theatrical Management,* 265.

policy, I must confess, I have never been able to understand. Suppose the wily managers did succeed in luring unwary audiences into their houses in the expectation of seeing something new and fresh, what must have been their state of mind on discovering that they had paid out good money to behold, not something new and strange, but an old chestnut like *She Stoops to Conquer* or *Laugh When You Can,* two which Ludlow on occasion camouflaged? On the other hand, if the names of the *dramatis personae* were displayed in advance and the cat thus let out of the bag, where was the gain? Yet the policy must have borne fruit, or it would not have persisted. McPherson was not ignorant of such dodges, for *The Painter's Daughter,* as the published cast reveals, proved to be nothing more startling than Tobin's thrice-familiar *The Honey Moon.*[6]

Apparently the bright particular star of this aggregation was Mrs. Dyke, who obviously held a proprietary interest in all the desirable feminine leads, and also invariably had her name printed in "caps," no matter how her confreres fared. Darrow as a rule also enjoyed this capital distinction, and to his lot fell such sugar-plums as Jaffier, Duke Aranza, Mark Redland, Don Carlos (in *Lovers' Quarrels*), John Lump (in *The Cobbler's Daughter*), Malcolm (in *The Falls of Clyde*), Rolla, and Ambrose Gwinett.

Less spectacular roles were turned over to Linden and, later, to a recruit named Hubbard, probably a former satellite of Ludlow and Smith.[7] The Dyke family was not represented by the matriarch alone. "Daddy" was on hand too, though when it came to the casting he was assigned a rung of the ladder far below that upon which his spouse was stationed. Not all his offspring displayed themselves, but at least three, and probably four, are listed from time to time on the bills. These were Miss Dyke, and Masters George Eugene (aged six) and William Ambrose (aged four). There was also a Master Albert, who was first advertised as Diggory Delph in *Family Jars;* the name *Dyke* is never attached to him, but he probably was one of the clan. To these must be added Schinotti, Clarke (or Clark), Kean (or Keen), Davis (whose chief function was to sing between the plays), and Miss Robinson (who is listed only as Georgiana in *The Spectre Bridegroom*). Finally, there were two

[6] I have found in the Odell *Annals* no evidence of this comedy's masquerading under this alias in New York.

[7] Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier,* 167.

young women who, the notices said, were St. Louisans. The first of these was a Miss Thomas, who preceded Miss Robinson as Georgiana, and was announced as a prospective participant in Mrs. Dyke's benefit, *The Falls of Clyde,* on February 6, but whose name does not appear in the cast. The other is a lady of mystery first designated as "Miss Lucust" and later as "Miss Lucas." The city directory of 1841 does not contain the name of Lucust, which can pretty certainly be dismissed as a misspelling. The Lucases, on the contrary, had been among the city's most prominent and respected families for more than twenty years, and, indeed, have so remained up to the present time. Unfortunately, the first name of this particular scion of the family, if such she really was, is not revealed. The whole thing is a bit puzzling because at that time the daughters of prominent families simply did not go on the public stage, certainly not under their own names, nor on the stages of museums. Such a violation of the current code of behavior could scarcely have failed to provoke a tempest in a teapot, for deep-rooted prejudices were not abandoned overnight. Ludlow mentions a man named Lucas, who, he says, was acting with the Turner company in Cincinnati in 1817, and who later went with Ludlow's forces to New Orleans, but that connection seems very remote.[8]

None of the Museum performances needs detain us long. It is most unlikely that any set a very high standard, all the more reason for questioning the identity of "Miss Lucas." Except for the paid advertisements, the *Republican* gave these productions little space. On February 3 it did say that it understood that McPherson had "fitted up one of his rooms in a neat and commodious manner, for the purpose of theatrical amusement. We understand he generally has crowded houses to witness the performances." These crowded houses did not prevent the father of many from printing a pitiful plea in the same paper two weeks later.

Mr. Editor

THEATRE AND MUSEUM * OLD DYKE'S BENEFIT. There are, in this world, many changes of life; Old Dyke has seen many things he would not tell—but the needy man who has known

[8]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 116, 118, and 121. William Turner, an Englishman, was a pioneering manager in the early theatrical days of Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and New Orleans. His wife, Sophia, who was the bright particular star of his little troupe, had once been a very lesser light at the Park (Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier,* 21).

better days, one whom tempting friends would pitch upon to do such deeds as would make the prosperous man lift up his hands and wonder who could do them—but for the wealth of worlds Dyke would not tread upon the worm in his path. Poverty is no sin, but a very great inconvenience, it is a common occurence [*sic*]. When you see a man sinking you will run to his relief. Now is the time to go your length for

OLD HARD TIMES.

This was the third benefit advertised, the two before having been his wife's and Darrow's. The last performance of which I have found a record was that of *Ambrose Gwinett* on March 2. Yet this advertisement promises that "To-morrow Mr. Riley will appear." Perhaps he did.

Mr. McPherson did not have to rely upon his actors and actresses, not even on Mrs. Dyke, for he had up his sleeve bigger, if not better, things. He had his "sitrecalodeons." On February 27 via the *Republican* he addressed a letter to the public in which he asserted warmly, under the heading of "BIG BONES," that it was not true that his predecessor, Mr. Koch, "had taken all the valuable antedeluvian remains with him." He goes on to say that "that is so far from being the fact, that I can assure my friends, the patrons of Natural Science and the public in general, that I have now in the St. Louis Museum such a valuable collection of fossils as no other museum in the world can boast of. There is first the remains of the GIGANTIC MISSOURIOM, which should excite the curiosity of the literary world; also the three varieties of the SITRECALODEON, with a most valuable collection of the varieties of the MASTODONS. If knowledge was more the pursuit of the present generation than sordid wealth, we should be a more learned and happy people."

This communication is a bit contradictory because at the beginning it speaks of Koch's departure South "with his gigantic Missourium"; then later he lists it—in capital instead of small letters—among his own assets. I think it is safe to assume that this was not the celebrated original.

On March 10 the enterprising proprietor announced that the Museum, having been closed for a week while repairs were being made, would re-open on the fifteenth with "a head of equal size of

the Missourium, with a most valuable collection of the Mastodon and Titrecalodeon." But that was not all. On the seventeenth he declared that he had "at an immense expense engaged for a few evenings the services of the far famed and justly celebrated MISS HAYDEN the accomplished *American* Sybil whose wonderful performances in the beautiful art of polite magic have put to blush all former attempts of the kind, being the first and only Lady in the world who has ever attempted those difficult experiments, which have been the theme of admiration throughout the principal cities of the Union." The dispenseuse of polite magic was, moreover, to be accompanied by "GRAND MOVING PANORAMAS of the cities of Jerusalem and Venice, covering an extent of canvass exceeding 100 square feet, painted by the celebrated artist Banvara" and "Beautiful Mechanical Automatons, which are the largest and most natural ever exhibited in this country."[9] There are no further references to his dramatic corps.

McPherson did not, however, have the field to himself. There were plenty of rival attractions. St. Louisans had no occasion to complain of enforced ennui. On March 1 the Theatre ended its winter season of darkness with an "UNRIVALLED ATTRACTION" in the person of "MONS. ADRIEN, SR.", who there exhibited his "Temple of Illusions, Metamorphoses and Wonders, Feats of Legerdemain and Natural Magic" and his "Illusions of the DOUBLE PHANTOSCOPE," the last-named probably mirror-tricks. The advertisement in the *Republican* is long and elaborate, but even more details were promised in the small bills. Just how many demonstrations this gentleman gave, I do not know, but he stayed in town for two weeks, bringing his engagement to a close on March 16 when, according to his announcement, he was to cut off a man's head by way of showing St. Louisans just how a guillotine functioned, no doubt another illusion of the "double phantoscope."

But that was not all, not near all. Space prohibits a complete catalogue of the delights offered local amusement-seekers, but a few must be heeded. On March 3 a Mr. Shaw announced that he and

[9]John Banvard (1815-1891) achieved celebrity with his "three-mile painting" of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers from the Yellowstone to the Gulf, reputedly the largest painting in the world. It took three hours to unroll. He purchased the St Louis Museum, but failed.

his daughters, aged fourteen and twelve, having come to town for the purpose of giving a few concerts, had been disappointed in finding the Concert Hall occupied and so had "left for Alton to return later." Return they did on the nineteenth, and gave the first of a series of at least five musicals. On the twenty-second the editor of the *Republican,* who seems to have been a perennial friend in need to the artistically bent, crowned them with wreaths of verbal flowers. "To the lovers of the divine art, we would say, if ye would drink at the fountain of pure music, go and hear the Misses Shaw." According to the advertisement, although gentlemen were required to pay a dollar to hear the young warblers, "Ladies' tickets will be placed at 50 cents." These children, Mary and Rosina Shaw, were, it may be said, approaching the threshold of success for in after years they were, especially Rosina, to become personages of consequence in the world of the theatre. The latter as Mrs. Charles Howard and, later, Mrs. Harry Watkins, became a popular star, making a favorable impression even in London.[10]

When the youthful Shaws knocked in vain at the door of the Theatre and were compelled to retreat across the Mississippi to the hills of Alton, they had been forestalled by another of their own kind, one of the most celebrated of infant phenomena, indeed the one who, through Charles Dickens, bestowed that title on the strange race.

This lady was Jean Davenport, the reputed original of Dickens' *Infant Phenomenon* in *Nicholas Nickleby.* To her dying day she denied the identity, but the evidence in support of the story is strong. At this time she was always accompanied by her father, who made himself a nuisance by locating himself in the audience to applaud his daughter's efforts and by hounding newspaper offices for publicity. In every particular he was the redoubtable Vincent Crummels [*sic*]. Although far past her childhood when she came to America her parents dressed her in absurdly infantile garments and put her forward at the Park Theatre, New York, as a prodigy playing Little Pickle, Sir Peter Teazle, Shylock, and, save the mark! Richard III and Sir Giles Overreach! It was all in the spirit of the gorgeous Crummels Family tradition.

These words were written of the "starlet" (as she would probably be called today) nine years after this St. Louis visitation, but they

[10]Maud and Otis Skinner. *One Man in His Time,* XII.

are just as apposite as if written of that occasion. They are quoted from *One Man in His Time,* the entertaining little volume in which Maud and Otis Skinner presented the diary of Harry Watkins, the second husband of Rosina Shaw.[11]

In this diary, under the date, apparently, of May 6, 1850, Harry tells us even more.[12] "Her father goes around among the editors and pays them to puff his daughter, and stations men in different parts of the house to call her out between the acts and at the end of the play, until the audience, not being acquainted with the tricks of the trade, imagine her acting must be something extraordinary. Well, you're a lucky girl in having such a father. His tactics are more valuable than your merits as an actress." In 1841 T. D. Davenport, alias Vincent Crummles, was, as we shall soon see, already a skillful manipulator.

The first shadows cast by coming events appeared in the pages of the local press on February 26.

A CARD

The guardians of MISS DAVENPORT, from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and Haymarket, the first juvenile actress of the age, have the honor of announcing that they have arrived in this city, but find the Theatre let for exhibition—they had arranged to leave today on the Platte, but several gentlemen have persuaded them to engage CONCERT HALL, and not go without introducing Miss Davenport to the

ST. LOUIS AUDIENCE

as it is the only opportunity of doing so previous to her return to Europe—therefore, Miss Davenport will appear for *two nights only.*

Miss Davenport is so well known as almost to render it superfluous to speak, that after her performance of Richard III in London, she was presented with the last hat worn by the late Kean; and by the citizens of New York with a splendid gold watch and chain, as a tribute to her talents. She has now returned from a rapid tour to the West Indies, being the first Dramatic Star that ever visited them. [This is not true.] At Damarara the boxes were raised to $3, and crowds turned nightly from the doors. At Barbadoes and Jamaica, Miss Davenport was received with enthusiasm.

[11]Pp. 81-82.
[12]*Ibid.,* 86.

Miss Davenport's first night is Tuesday next, March 3d. The sofas will be numbered and let as boxes. A plan will be ready at Concert Hall, by 10 o'clock Monday morning. Tickets $1. Particulars will be advertised.

The same issue of the *Republican* printed an editorial congratulating the citizens "that she has not left without performing, as it is seldom we have a visit from one of so high repute for extraordinary talent," and added, "We do not think she has any thing to regret in not obtaining the Theatre at this cold season of the year, in our opinion, the Concert Hall is now by far, the most comfortable, being well warmed and lighted with gas, and we mistake, if it will not hold 600 persons. We anticipate a rich treat."

But the rich treat had to be postponed. The young lady had a cold. "We have no doubt," wrote the gallant editor when Tuesday came around, "our readers will join with us in regretting Miss DAVENPORT'S indisposition, having so lately left a broiling climate like Jamaica, great care ought to have been taken to prevent cold. However, we have made inquiry and find that there is no doubt she will appear on Thursday evening, to which the opening night is postponed. We have also heard there have been a great many applications for seats." (Meanwhile, the hardy Mons. Adrien was still "performing his wonders" in the chilly Theatre.)

According to the *Dictionary of American Biography,* Jean Margaret Davenport was born May 3, 1829. If this date is correct, she was when she first burst upon the St. Louis public not quite twelve years of age. Whether or not her father, Thomas Donald Davenport, actually was Dickens' model for Vincent Crummles, there was, as Otis Skinner points out, a suspiciously marked family resemblance. He had first presented his child to the theatrical world on the stage of the theatre at Richmond, England, of which he was the manager, in 1837, her debut role being the suitable one of Richard III. Just how sensational was her success it is difficult now to determine, such was the avalanche of superlatives under which her father buried it in his publicity. Harry Watkins gives us the measure of his reliability. There can, however, be no doubt that succeed to some extent she did, for she played repeated engagements both in London and in the provinces until she came to this country the following year. It

should be understood that, phenomenon or not, she certainly was not unique, because she had been preceded on her home territory by the celebrated Master Betty and Clara Fisher (later Mrs. Maeder), and in this country by the latter favorite and also by Joseph Burke; and she was a few years later to be outdistanced by the even more incredible Bateman Sisters, Ellen and Kate, daughters of our old friends, Hezekiah Linthicum and Sidney Cowell Bateman, who swept all before them as Lady Macbeth, Shylock, and Richard III, and Macbeth, Portia, and Richmond respectively at the ages of three and six.[18] One of the things about the stage of the "Palmy Days" which we today find it more than difficult to comprehend is the pleasure which our forebears, presumably persons of normal intelligence, took in such spectacles and their acceptance of them as serious histrionic efforts. Yet seriously they did take them, and the critics analyzed the "interpretations" of these children with all the solemnity they brought to bear on the efforts of the Kembles, Keans, and Booths. It seems to me that the chief sufferers must have been the adult actors who were constrained to support these tots in secondary roles.

Just who supported Jean Davenport when on Thursday, March 4, having sufficiently recovered from her cold, she made her bow to St. Louis audiences is not altogether clear. When she had appeared in New York, at the Park and the National, she had had the backing of regular stock companies, the actors being compelled, willy-nilly, as Professor Odell puts it, to "stoop to inches so low." But in St. Louis she was on her own. The Ludlow and Smith forces were not here to play second fiddle. According to the advertisement on February 27, "opposite characters" were to be filled by her mother, an "actress of celebrity from the London theatre's" and her father "formerly stage manager of the Strand Theatre." But these parents, however zealous in the cause, can hardly have played all the other roles in *Richard III, The Merchant of Venice, Douglas,* and *The School for Scandal,* whatever they may have done in the afterpieces. Yet the only mention of any further support, found in the notice of *Douglas* (March 9), is the revelation that Lord Randolph was to be played by "A Gentleman." It is, of course, not at all im-

[18]Laurence Hutton. *Curiosities of the American Stage,* 238.

possible that she attracted Daddy Dyke and his satellites into her orbit, the Museum having apparently brought its theatrical season to a close. But why is there, then, no mention of these actors in either the advertisements or the reviews? Mrs. Dyke at least was not one to hide her light under a bushel. Another possibility is that the Davenports gave, not complete dramas, but only those scenes in which the daughter of the house was to shine; yet even this concession would inevitably involve embarrassments. How, for instance, could the Trial Scene from *The Merchant of Venice* be done with only four persons?

The plays on the first night were this last-named tragi-comedy and *The Manager's Daughter,* a specialty concocted by Davenport himself. Two days later the *Republican* indulged in a lengthy panegyric from which I shall quote:

. . . Miss Davenport is the most talented actress of her age we have ever seen. Indeed, she seems to carry her audience with her as if she wielded the wand of the enchanter Merlin, and notwithstanding the public mind expected much, yet in her case those expectations have been fully gratified. Nay, surprise and astonishment were elicited from all, that one so young could give effect to the deeply poetical inspirations of Shakespeare—her Richard III was classically true to nature—her elocution was pure and elegant, and destitute of that start and stare—sudden pause and transition for effect, which characterizes the generality of actors. No—every word had its due emphasis—every sentence seemed to flow naturally and gracefully, and the action of the tragedy alone, seemed to produce that whirlwind of passion which Miss Davenport so beautifully illustrated in the dying scene.

This all sounds wonderful. But it is hard not to recall Harry Watkins' observations.

The Manager's Daughter is a protean farce of the type dear to the hearts of infant prodigies or, perhaps, of their promoters. In this case the assortment of parts ostensibly "interpreted" by the marvel were: Hector Earsplitter, a young gentleman from Weatherfield, Connecticut; Effie Heatherbloom, a Scottish lassie; Fergus O'Botherwell, an Irish youth; Paul, a French minstrel; Sapinella Thespis; and, finally, Jean M. Davenport. The last-named is the only one in the effectiveness of which I at this late date can feel much confidence. Her parents played Mr. and Mrs. Dictator.

The second night was to have been devoted to *The Merchant of Venice* and *My Country Cousin,* another protean piece, which calls for no comment. But the performance does not seem to have been given, perhaps because of inclement weather, perhaps because of a return of the star's indisposition. At least, I have found no review of it in the *Republican,* March 9, and the comment on the same bill, given on March 8, indicates in no way that this was a repetition.

Miss Davenport appeared again last night. Her performance of Shylock was one of the most astonishing representations of character we have ever witnessed, and her changes in the Country Cousin, were equally talented. We should say all heads of families should take their younger branches to see her in Norval.

Why *one* of the most astonishing?

The advertisement in the same paper informed her clientèle that at "the request of several citizens" the young lady was delaying her departure in order that she might be seen again, on Tuesday and Wednesday (March 9 and 10), "Whatever the state of the weather." On this occasion she filled a part slightly more suited to her years if not to her sex, the youthful Norval in Home's *Douglas,* and so had a chance to show the local schoolboys just how the famous lines

"My name is Norval;
On the Grampian Hills my father feeds his flocks."

should be declaimed. Mrs. Davenport played Lady Randolph, Mr. Davenport Glenalvon, and, as I said above, "a Gentleman" Lord Randolph. Apparently the same bill was repeated the next evening; that is unless the promise concerning the weather was ignored.

The next day the editor reported that that evening would, he believed, be "decidedly the last night but one that Miss Davenport will appear." The bill was to be the same as that advertised for the two preceding evenings. What had happened to them? Had they come off as planned or, despite the earlier boast, had bad weather again interfered? Then on the next evening, the young lady was to have her benefit, and presumably had it, for thereafter the pages of the *Republican* were innocent of the record-breaking deluge of publicity which had swept across them for a fortnight. Here is what happened—again, presumably—on the occasion of her final adieu.

ATTRACTION! LAST NIGHT!
FOR THE BENEFIT OF MISS DAVENPORT

And decidedly her last appearance in St. Louis
On this occasion Miss Davenport will perform

SIR PETER

being a character never attempted by any other young lady; recite "Collins' Ode on the Passions" with all the original music, and personate in OLD AND YOUNG, various characters, sings three songs, dances a National dance, performs the British manual exercise and fires a rifle!

What greater display of versatility could be asked?

In *The School for Scandal* her mother was the Lady Teazle and her father was Joseph Surface. What an exhibition that must have been! And who, incidentally, played all the other roles?

The installment of the "Dramatic History of St. Louis" (previously referred to) which appeared in the *St. Louis Home Journal* of March 1, 1868, soon after a visit to the city of Mrs. General Lander, the former celebrated prodigy, gives us a glimpse of her first engagement here from the point of view of the chief actress herself. "Her reminiscences of St. Louis were scanty indeed. All that she could possibly remember was a crowd of fiery faces, as it seemed to her, which roared at her, and threw her bouquets. There was, indeed, one circumstance which she distinctly recollected, probably because it would seem to mark an era in the feminine mind. *She wore her first long dress* during her brief stay in St. Louis, and it is probably owing to that important fact that she remembers us or our Concert Hall in the slightest measure."

* * *

I now come to a mystery. Just where did Ludlow get the data for his account of the St. Louis season of 1841? For said account bears precious little resemblance to the facts as revealed in the contemporary press or in his own correspondence. Apparently it was not just a case of confusing his dates, for I have been unable to find any other season which his version would really fit. One thing he did, however, get right; the spring season was, despite the utmost efforts of the partners, pretty close to a total loss.

He says that the opening play was *The Dramatist* and that the following performers took part: N. M. Ludlow, George P. Farren, Richard Russell, Jr., Mrs. Russell, and Mrs. Farren.[14] "The second night introduced Mr. James Thorne and Miss Eliza Petrie—both returning to us after a year's playing in Vicksburg and Natchez, Mississippi." To these he adds Ben De Bar. "After a few nights' performances of good plays and farces of the stock company, the horses were introduced and dramatic and equestrian performances were given in conjunction, for a few nights the receipts were fair, but afterwards began to dwindle, becoming 'small by degrees and beautifully less.' The fact was, that about this time the financial difficulties of the West had just reached a climax, and as the pressure in the money market became heavy the people's purses became tight, and very few felt like spending more money than absolute necessity demanded. We saw plainly that we, too, must reduce our expenses, or we could not avoid losing heavily during the season; so we sent away our troupe of equestrians to perform under canvas during the summer and early fall."

He goes on to say that J. H. Hackett played a brief and unprofitable engagement early in May, followed with somewhat greater success by Mrs. Fanny Fitzwilliam and J. B. Buckstone. "The season had now reached the first of June, and not being likely to improve with the approaching hot weather, we commenced the benefits for all such as were entitled to them." Most of this is "of imagination all compact."

Nor is Smith of much greater assistance; his version is too brief and indefinite to yield much real information.

Both managers state correctly that the season began on April 26, but it did not do so with either the play or the actors specified by Ludlow. Except for himself and Mrs. Russell, none of the persons he names was even in town. Nor were Eliza Petrie, Ben De Bar, and James Thorne among those present. On May 3, Smith wrote his partner that he had received a letter from Miss Petrie. "You will see she does not accept our offer, & invites further offers. She appears to be dazzled by the *name* of *high salary* at the East (and only got one-half of it!)—but I think she leans very much to the

[14]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 543.

JEAN DAVENPORT

AS LITTLE PICKLE

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library.

SIGNIOR HERVIO NANO

AN AZIATIC IN

THE GNOME FLY.

HERVIO NANO

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

West & South."[15] De Bar did not come up the river until the end of summer; Thorne came not at all. The Farrens were not on hand for the opening; and Mrs. Farren's brother, Dick Russell, was not engaged.[16]

An Englishman who visited this country during the worst of robot bomb attacks on London asserted that the strain of anxiety was much greater when he was over here away from the actual scene of the bombardments and his imagination had free play than it had been when he was actually on the spot and could see with his own eyes the horrors about him. So it was with Smith and Ludlow during this spring season. Ludlow toiling away in St. Louis where one woe did tread upon another's heels seems for once to have ridden through the storm with equanimity. "Glad to find you in such good spirits in spite of the unpromising commencement of your season," wrote his new son-in-law, Mat Field, from New Orleans on May 20.[17] Smith, on the other hand, who had remained in New Orleans to wind up the winter's affairs and do what he could to help his partner by long distance evidently gave rein to his imagination, and worried himself into a state of distraction. He had as a matter of fact plenty to worry him. They both had. For one thing, as Ludlow notes, times were bad and people were spending but little of their scanty cash on entertainment. Then there was the circus.

This troupe, under the management of Messrs. Fogg and Stickney, according to Ludlow's version, arrived in New Orleans late in February or early in March, and threw Smith into a panic.[18] So fearful was he of their rivalry with the American Theatre that he persuaded his partner that the firm should engage them for their own establishment. Smith records in his diary (May 3) that they

[15]She was acting in the company of William E. Burton at the New National in New York (Odell. *Annals,* IV, 469).

[16]"Remember *Dick Russell is not engaged.*—The understanding with Farren was *if he applied in a proper manner* (having positively declined) in the course of a week, he was to be engaged at the rate we offered him. *He has not said a word on the subject*—on the contrary, has told many persons he was going to the West Indies with his wife (Miss Morgan [?]) —Now I vote—don't engage him at all. If you think differently, wait at all events till I arrive, & we can talk it over" (Sol Smith to N. M. Ludlow, May 12, 1841).

[17]Matthew C. Field had married Cornelia Burke Ludlow in February.

[18]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 540.

were to be paid $700 a week until April 1, performing wherever Ludlow and Smith wished them to. After that, they were under contract not to do business elsewhere in New Orleans or in St. Louis "except under our direction or in connection with us." The theatrical firm sustained a great financial loss, paying this circus in addition to their own equestrian troupe, and Fogg and Stickney broke their agreement by setting up their tent in the neighborhood of the American. When threatened with legal action, they fled, Smith thought, to St. Louis, and his agitation was intense.

There was, furthermore, Fanny Fitzwilliam, who was supposed to pull them out of their hole by main force. She did draw crowds, but her fees made Smith wince, and then she was taken sick.

Mrs. Fitz is still laying on her back. When you may expect her at St. Louis, the Lord only knows—I should say (in honest truth) not a moment before 1st June . . . We *hope* she will play next Tuseday. If she does, & *continues* to play, she will close on the following Monday (10th) & probably leave here on Wedny 12th for Natchez & Vickburgh, at both of which places I think she will certainly play.

Thus Smith wrote his partner on May 1, the letter being but one of a series of "chronicles of woe." "I have a way of elaborating upon my subject," he had written on April 23, "—particularly when writing to *you*—as we are partners, I feel a sort of fiendish *pleasure* in making you *share* my miseries. Isn't this a horrible propensity?"

To the communiqué of May 1 he added a postscript.

I see the tent of Fogg & Stickney is struck—& they are *off for St. Louis* in the boat which carries this package!!! I can't get the contract out of the Court today, but will send it immediately—but if you think it is worth while to try to stop them, you can swear to the facts, & have the contract to show afterwards. For my own part, I doubt whether they will not get round it somehow, as they did here—If I were you, I would put the Govr. in possession of the facts of the case, so that they may get no countenance from the Pennant.[19]

They will no doubt play h-ll with our business in St. Louis for a while—

[19] I have not been able to identify "the Govr.," but he seems to have been someone connected with the *Pennant*.

I think you can stop *Stickney*, at any rate—but I don't know as its worth while to try—You can judge better, being on the spot.

I am sick—sick of dealing with rogues—& I think if we can get rid of all Equestrians (after a while) we had better.

The next day he wrote again.

"Desperate measures demand desperate remedies." I have been thinking all night of the infernal conduct of Stickney, & have pictured to myself their confounded *troupe* riding over you in St. Louis, 'rough shod.' Well, I have come to this conclusion: *To send up the Equestrians immediately without stopping on the way.* But as they would be of no use there until the Theatre was fixed to receive them, I shall make them play in the 3rd Municipality until the close of their engagements, or until Monday next, & then up they go!—So now I advise you as soon as you receive this, to close for 3 nights for the purpose of making the circle, & preparing for the horses. With force enough, the alteration can easily be made in 3 days—& by that time, *the troupe will arrive.* "I take the responsibility" for this step, for many reasons which must be obvious to you—but the two main ones are—1 to fortify you against the traitors, F. & Stickney & 2d because Mrs. Fitz must play at N. & V.—& will *gag* on the way, which will delay her till 1st June or later,—Ranger will not trust St. Louis[30]—H. Nano is sick—& in short, unless something Bold & desperate is done, F & S. will just walk over the course.

There is much more about the circus and the measures he suggests that Ludlow adopt to defeat the enemy, but there is, I think, no necessity of copying it in its entirety. Just what action Ludlow did take is not revealed, but evidently the hostiles did invade St. Louis though under another name. The contemporary press shows that early in May a circus did show up, the name of the proprietor being given as G. B. Johnson. I have come across no mention of either Fogg or Stickney, but that they were present is revealed in a letter from Mat Field to Ludlow dated May 14.

Sorry to hear of your bad business, but I did not anticipate much better. Your season might depend upon Fitzwilliam and the horses. Sol tells me that Fogg & Stickney are running against you. Open your ring at once with a handsome flourish, and cut their ungrateful throats! Have it made so as to put the seats down again when

[30]Ranger was an American actor of English training. Dr. Odell describes him as "a gentlemanly interpreter of gentlemen." He played in New Orleans, but not in St. Louis. Of Hervio Nano, more later.

Fitz comes. I think your prospect is safe and *good,* but I never looked upon it so sanguinely as you seemed to do.

Apparently Ludlow had trouble of some sort in trying to defend himself because in his letter of May 3, Smith says: "As for your difficulty with the officers—as *I* am living yet, I consider it a fair *supposition* that you are—at any rate, if they have blown you into 'tother world, 'tis likely this letter will not follow you there—So I will suppose the 'gentleman' let you live, as Stickney did me—The prospects in St. Louis are gloomy in the extreme."

Meanwhile, amid these alarms and excursions, the season somehow got under way. The opening bill comprised *Mademoiselle de Belle Isle* or *A Night in the Bastille,* "for the first time in this city, translated from the French of Alex. Dumas; adapted to the English stage by J. M. Field," and the farce of *My Aunt.*[21] Joe Field and his wife, the former Eliza Riddle, returning to the city after an absence of three years, appeared as stars in the theatre in which they had formerly played as regular members of the stock company. Both were very talented and both had enjoyed great popularity in St. Louis, and this popularity they and the managers hoped to capitalize on now. In the Dumas piece, one of a number he adapted, he was the Chevalier d'Aubigny, and she filled the title role. The advertisement names only two other participants, Maynard (back without his wife) as the Marquis de la Pris, and Mrs. Wright as the Marquise. Field also played the lead in the afterpiece, but his *vis-à-vis* this time was, not his wife, but a Mrs. Warren, who was, according to the card in the *Republican,* making her first appearance in St. Louis. This lady I have not been able to identify except that Ludlow includes her name in his list of the New Orleans company in 1843.[22] They were supported by Mrs. Russell and Saunders, both carried over from the previous year. The performance started at seven-thirty, and the prices remained what they had been the year before.

Of Joe Field's adaptation I have found no other mention. The advertisement states that it had been done at the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans and in Mobile, but neither Ludlow nor Smith alludes to it. Years later, another translation of the same play, this

[21] *Missouri Republican,* April 24, 1841.
[22] Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 561 and 570.

time from the pen of Fanny Kemble, was, according to Dr. Quinn staged by Julia Dean under the title of *The Duke's Wager*.[23] But Field's version, like most of his works, seems to have evaporated. Joe Field was an ardent author and a few years later achieved a national reputation in journalism under the pseudonym of *Straws*. He was also for several years one of the editors of the *St. Louis Reveille*, founded by him in 1844 in conjunction with his brother Mat (who died soon after) and Charles Keemle, but none of his many plays enjoyed enduring success. As an actor, he was probably superior to Mat, but, when it came to writing, the younger brother was the more gifted.

The Fields remained for six more performances, including their respective benefits. On the twenty-seventh day they were seen as Claude and Pauline in the inevitable *Lady of Lyons* with Mrs. Russell mothering Eliza Field, instead of as usual her own daughter, Saunders as Damas, and Maynard as Beauseant. Both husband and wife took part in *The Dumb Belle* with Johnson and Sankey. The following evening saw a triple bill made up of a repetition of *Mademoiselle de Belle Isle, 33 John Street* (in which Field appeared with Maynard and Mrs. Warren), and *The Two Gregories*, with Sankey and Saunders in the name parts, supported by Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Mueller. On Thursday the *pièce de résistance* was *Lucile* or *The Story of a Heart* ("the first time in three years"). This stage version by W. R. Bernard of one of Bulwer's sentimental tales in *Pilgrims of the Rhine* gave Joe a chance to show how well he could simulate blindness, and Eliza to show her mettle in a role associated with the popular Mrs. Keeley.[24] When they had finished, Ludlow entertained with his version of Nipperkin in *The Sprigs of Laurel* ("with Comic Songs") and Mr. Lavette danced a Highland fling. The curtain had been run up on Saunders and Mrs. Warren in *Intrigue*. This was certainly enough for one evening, in quantity, if not in quality.

On the thirtieth Mrs. Field took her benefit in Bulwer's *Money*, playing of course the part of Clara Douglass, a few days less than three months after Clara Fisher Maeder had introduced it to New

[23]Quinn: *American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War*, 253.
[24]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 114.

York audiences. This comedy, according to Dr. Odell long a popular favorite, had, therefore, not been slow in making the journey to the West. Field himself was the Evelyn, with Sankey as Sir John Vesey, Maynard as Sir Frederick Blount, Saunders as Graves, Mrs. Russell as Lady Franklin, and Mrs. Wright as Georgiana. The afterpiece was *A Day After the Wedding*, both visitors participating. The play was repeated the following evening coupled with a farce called *The Haunted Inn* in which some anonymous "young gentleman of this city" made "his first appearance on any stage."

The Field engagement was brought to a close with the St. Louis premiere of Sheridan Knowles' latest tragedy, *John of Procida* (advertised as *John de Procida*) or *The Bridal of Messina*, which had been produced for the first time at Covent Garden the previous year with Ellen Tree as Isoline. Oddly enough, it seems never to have reached New York, for I can find no reference to it in the Odell *Annals*. It is no work of genius, written as it is in the author's most turgid style, and so has never enjoyed the vogue of *Virginius* or *The Hunchback*. Procida himself, the Sicilian father who unwittingly kills his own son, was entrusted to Maynard, with Field as Fernando, the rebellious son, with his actual wife as his stage wife also. The popular, if undependable, Farren made his seasonal entrance as Angelo Martine, and Sankey played the Governor. How the many other roles were disposed of is not revealed. Now that Mrs. Field was departing, Mrs. Farren arrived on the scene, welcome as ever, as Kate O'Brien in *Perfection*.[25] Joe Field said good-bye as Charles Paragon, and Farren was Sir Lawrence.

"Just recd. yours by the 'Meteor'—oh!—What *is* to be done? $214 & $100 the 1st nights of the season!" So exclaimed Smith in a letter to Ludlow written at half-past nine on the evening of May 3. "There is no use whatever," he continues, "in *attempting* to make *Stars* of *Stock* actors—be their merits ever so great (Mr. & particularly Mrs. Field, for instance)—the public will not stand for it." In their earlier capacities Joe Field and Eliza Riddle had been prime

[25] "I have thought it best to send F. & wife the instant she is able to travel—as you must be badly off for females, after Mrs. Field leaves." (Sol Smith to N. M. Ludlow, New Orleans, April 23.) "All is square with Farren & you begin with him on the summer sally. I loan him $25—& send the due bill to you. He says he will pay it out of his first week."

favorites in St. Louis, but they were apparently too much like members of the family to be accepted in the role of honored guests. On April 29 the editor of the *Republican* printed his apology for not having been on hand to welcome his old friends. "The first night, we understand, was greeted with a full and fashionable house, and Mr. and Mrs. Field were welcomed back to the St. Louis boards with a hearty round of applause." This does not tally exactly with Smith's rueful exclamation. But the editor soon found it necessary to exhort his fellow-citizens to do their duty by Ludlow and the Fields, and to extol the virtues of the latter. But his seems to have been as a voice crying in the wilderness. On May 9 Mat Field wrote his father-in-law: "Sol has told me how badly your season has commenced, and I must say it looks monstrous discouraging; but you will be sure of business with Fitzwilliam, and then the horses ought to be a strong card—*very strong*—the first season; for you remember the French, who are so fond of this amusement, make up a large portion of the St. Louis population."

But Mrs. Fitzwilliam and the horses were not yet over the horizon. In the meantime the managers offered a week's engagement of a different type of newcomer. Could elegance compete with circus performers and a menagerie?

"Brown, the Comedian," observed the *Republican* on May 7, "is making smashing work of it at the Theatre. The young gentlemen who go to see him in one of his best characters have to unbutton their straps to laugh at his comicalities. Tight lacing won't do for the ladies just now. Tonight is one of his best performances."

This laugh-provoking entertainer was one James S. Browne, an English comedian who had made his American debut at the National Theatre in New York three years before, and who was especially associated with the role of the gentleman-thief, Robert Macaire, the legitimate paternal ancestor of Raffles of later days, of which part he had been the creator. According to Allston Brown, he cut quite a wide swath. "A fine, handsome, jovial, joyous, and spirited fellow, with vitality enough for six in him, and a heart 'as big as an ox.' Perhaps he was the most popular man, in his day, upon the stage. Commanding money in abundance, he spent it like a prince. He rode, he drove, he ate, he drank, like one born in the lap of luxurious

fortune, scattering his easily gotten means with a lavish profusion that surrounded him with all the butterflies of fashion, and attached to him an army of friends. The women idolized him, the men copied and envied him. The public he magnetized. The managers he enslaved. The profession loved him, and the world panegyrized him. . ."[26]

Of such stuff, according to his namesake (minus the final e) was the meteor who flashed across St. Louis skies during the early nights of May, 1841. Yet Ludlow does not even mention him, and Smith merely includes his name in a list of Caldwell's stock actors in New Orleans.[27] As a matter of fact, for a man of such transcendent charm and celebrity, he has left surprisingly few "footprints in the sands of time," for few writers so much as mention him in their pages. Allston Brown concludes his sketch with the statement that eventually this brightly colored bubble of popularity and wealth collapsed and he spent his last days in poverty. His St. Louis sojourn, although it apparently delighted at least one of the local editors, clearly failed to set the Mississippi ablaze. There is certainly no record of any increase in the number of shekels which found their way into the managerial till.

He opened on May 4 in "O'Keefe's beautiful comedy of WILD OATS, or THE STROLLING GENTLEMAN," playing the part of Rover. To support him, he had the Farrens, as Sir George Thunder and Lady Amaranth, Maynard as Harry, and Sankey as Ephraim. The afterpiece was *My Young Wife and My Old Umbrella* in which he was joined by Mrs. Warren. Wednesday, after first playing Sergeant Austerlitz in *The Maid of Croissy* or *Theresa's Vow* (Mrs. Farren doing the vowing), he presented himself in his greatest part, Robert Macaire (alias Redmond) in *Robert Macaire* or *The Two Murderers*. The next evening this play was repeated, with the star joining Mrs. Wright in a *pas de deux* (as he had, as a matter of fact, also done the evening before). But one part was not enough for a man of his vigor; so he helped raise the curtain as Phantom in the "petit comedy" of *Frightened to Death*.

Friday's bill was made up of *A Way to Get Married* with practically everybody except Ludlow in the cast. Browne himself was

[26]Brown: *American Stage*.
[27]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 153.

the Tangent with Mrs. Farren opposite as Julia Faulkner. Saturday saw *The Maid of Croissy* again with the "comic piece" of *A Nabob for an Hour*, Browne and Saunders playing Sam Hobbs and Dick Dumpy respectively.

The next week opened with *Jacques Strop*, "a few more passages in the life of that renowned and eccentric thief ROBERT MACAIRE" and the *Nabob* again. Tuesday was a big evening, for, not only was the audience regaled with a repetition of the sequel just mentioned, but Charles Eaton, having again drifted into town, put in his oar as Sir Edward Mortimer in *The Iron Chest*. Just how enthusiastically the public responded to this double-barrelled attraction I do not know, but I do know that there was strong competition. "A splendid ball," reported the *Republican* on Monday, "is to be given at the Planters House tomorrow evening. The beauty and fashion of the city will be there. There is no question, from the known abilities of the hosts, that it will be a little the *tallest* affair ever seen in these parts." So, if all the élite were to be enjoying the square dances in the city's newest and most elegant hotel, and Messrs. Eaton and Browne were left dependent on the proletariat and the westward-bound transients, they probably enjoyed "slim pickin's" in the Theatre. Of one thing I am sure, and that is that Mr. Browne would far rather have been disporting himself with the beaux and belles than playing to half-empty benches. (I dare say he hurried over to the Planters House as soon as his part was played.)

The next evening he took his benefit and made his farewell bow in a blaze of glory. The first of the many attractions offered was Dance's comedy, *The Old English Gentleman*, described by Dr. Odell as "one of the most successful of recent English comedies—one of a delightful, but (to the Twentieth Century) defunct and insincere school."[28] The title role, Squire Broadlands, was entrusted to Farren, while the star displayed himself as Horace Ametrius, "the most exquisite of exquisites," a part for which he was no doubt exceptionally well fitted. Mrs. Farren performed Fanny, and her mother was Temperance. After this comedy Eaton "obliged with' his imitations of Forrest, Booth, Vandenhoff, C. Kean, Addams, and

[28]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 217.

Barnes. Next on the bill of fare was a new farce, *A Gentleman in Difficulties*, with Browne as Mr. Sedley. The evening was finally terminated by "the tragic Burlesque Opera of BOMBASTES FURIOSO," Browne and Farren being the chief participants. Once more the editor proffered his aid: "Tonight Browne the Comedian, takes a benefit. There will be lots of fun and, we trust, lots of people there. There is no two ways about it, that Browne is a huckleberry above anything we have seen in these diggins in genteel comedy. If you wish to see a crowd, and laugh and grow fat, go tonight."

So much for Browne.

A favorite device of American managers when they found themselves in a tight place was to proffer a benefit for the local firemen, who were at that time still strictly amateurs. Of course, they did not profit directly from these affairs, except that they could be sure that for one evening at least expenses would be met, but the performances could usually be counted upon for dividends (sometimes, it is true, very meagre) in good will and publicity and occasionally, as we shall see later, they did not cast their bread upon the waters in vain. They liked to be regarded as public-spirited citizens and also to acquire a little additional armor to meet the shafts of the dwindling, but still vigorous, Puritanical opponents of everything theatrical.[29] So now Ludlow, who was certainly in trouble, addressed a letter to Edward Smith, President of the St. Louis Fire-

[29]Upon the death of President Harrison, the Reverend Artemus Bullard, Pastor of the 1st Presbyterian Church, saw fit to preach a sermon in which he denounced all those from among his fellow-countrymen who chanced to have displeased him and to be in his opinion the causes of this tragic exhibition of Divine ire. Among the guilty (although they had by some years preceded old Tippecanoe from this world) were the wicked perpetrators of that monstrous crime, the Louisiana Purchase. But special excoriation was reserved for the members of the theatrical profession. "Our theatres," he asserted, "have become too degraded for any purpose but the exhibition of brute animals and the most abandoned of the human family, male and female." This diatribe he was not content merely to utter by word of mouth, but he published it as well in an appropriately yellow-backed pamphlet. Sol Smith was not a man to suffer such attacks in silence, and he promptly sat himself down and, using his legal experience and his innate good sense and fairness, penned a rebuttal which might well serve as a model for similar defences. This he not only sent to the clergyman, but caused to be printed and also included in his last volume of memoirs. It is marked by logic, and also by the restraint of its tone and its deep indignation. (Smith. *Theatrical Management*, 157.)

man's Fund Association, offering such a benefit, which offer was promptly accepted. Almost as promptly the tented enemy followed suit.

"So you have roused up *one* good house out of them, hey, with your 'Firemen's Fund Ben.'" This from Mat on May 20. The bill which "roused" them was a good one, being composed of *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *The Liar*. In the former Eaton was seen and heard as Sir Giles Overreach (one of the "fattest parts" and one of the noisiest in any tragedian's repertory). In the farce Ludlow was the young Wilding and Sankey the old one. Between the two Mrs. Farren recited a Fireman's Address "written by a gentleman of this city."

Meanwhile, far to the South, Smith was having his problems. Nor was he cheered by the intelligence that Mrs. Field's benefit had been a failure. His chief concern was to get the horses off to St. Louis where they could enter the fray and meet Fogg and Stickney, as it were, on their own sawdust. But all was not clear sailing.

I engaged the passages on board the 'Platte,' thinking of course *all* would go on her—$17 each cabin passenger & $10 for the grooms, (cabin) & $7 for the Horses—dog cheap!—& now I find Bailey [the firm's chief clerk] & wife & nearly *all* the rest go on another boat! Bailey gave as a reason that he would not go with *Mrs.* Whitlock—& now I find *she* goes in the same boat with him! Indeed, I don't believe there will be any but Robinson, the Stones, & the Evans to go in the Platte.[80] They agreed to take our baggage for nothing, in consideration of the *great number* of *passengers* they were likely to have, (for I only actually engaged such as we had control of,)—& now Nelson & the rest go to other boats & tell what the Platte takes them for, (which by the bye was to be a *secret* but was of necessity told to those interested,—those who had to pay their own passages)—& the other boats, to get them away, won't be outdone, & offer to take for the same—It is very disagreeable. I'm sure they'll kick when they see the small number of passengers & the great quantity of baggage. We are to have 90 days credit.

While the horses are en route, we return to St. Louis.

[80]Mrs. Whitlock is unidentified. The name is, of course, the same as that of Mrs. Siddons' sister, who had died in 1836. Mrs. Whitlock was one of the leading stars of the American stage before and after 1800, and this may have been a daughter-in-law. The equestrians were John Robinson and Eaton Stone. Who Evans was, I do not know.

THEATRE

In as much as this day has been nominated by the President of the United States, as one of general humiliation and prayer; and on such an occasion it is desirable that all business and amusement should be suspended the management of this Theatre feel it a duty incumbent on them to close the establishment for this night. There will be a performance on Saturday evening next, on which occasion Mr. C. H. EATON will appear again.

SIGNOR HERVIO NANO

The celebrated METEMPSYCHOSIAN actor, more generally known as the

GNOME FLY

From all the principal European Theatres, is engaged for a few nights, and will appear for the first time in this city on SATURDAY NEXT.

This notice was displayed in the press on May 14. A month before the New Orleans theatre had been closed out of respect to the late Wm. Henry Harrison, but this day of humiliation seems to have been general in theme.

As a matter of fact, Eaton appeared twice more, as Carwin in *Therese, The Orphan of Geneva* on Saturday, and as Shylock for his benefit on Monday. Mrs. Farren, of course, was the Portia, and Ludlow was seen as Gratiano, one of his favorite parts. Eaton included among his imitations one of the imminent Mrs. Fitzwilliam as the Widow Wiggins. That was the last St. Louisans saw of this talented young man. Two years later, having had a few more drinks than he could take care of, he fell from a high gallery in a Pittsburgh hotel and suffered fatal injuries. "I thought him then," says Ludlow, "the most promising young tragedian of the day; but he was too fond of company and the 'social glass,'—qualities that have been the ruin of hundreds of the most brilliant intellects, in various positions of life."[81]

As for "Signor Hervio Nano," neither of the St. Louis managers mentions his name in his published recollections. Perhaps they were a little ashamed to do so. The vogue enjoyed by this unfortunate

[81]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 574.

creature reflects no credit on the American stage or, rather, the American public which patronized it.

I shall try to get *Hervio Nano* to go up with Smith.[82] If he does, you can let him play 4 or 5 nights while the carpenter work can be going on—thus—if he arrives on Wedny or Thursday, he might play till the middle of the following week, & you could then close till Sunday, & bring out the Equestrians on Monday 24th—but remember if you *can* spare him 4 nights (in all) you will have the right to keep him, but in that case you are bound to get up 3 of his pieces—which you can do, having Smith, whom I send (if he can get off) by this boat.

So wrote Sol on May 3. Three days later he added that he had engaged him for five nights with the privilege of reducing to four. Who was this "metempsychosian actor"? Let Dr. Odell answer.

This freak was not, like Parsloe or Cony or Blanchard, a normal mortal dressed in animal skin and aping the manners of a monkey or what not; as Ireland puts it, "the real name of this unfortunate individual was Harvey Leach, and he was a native of Westchester County, N. Y., born in 1804. Deformed from his birth, his legs on reaching manhood not being larger than a child of two years old, while his body was of the average size, he had been connected with various circus companies, and his success in making up and representing such characters as those above mentioned [a gnome, a baboon, and a fly] gave him profitable employment for several years. Mr. Wemyss states that he died in London, March 16, 1847, from maltreatment received at the hands of the populace, on whom he attempted (clothed in a close-fitting dress of hair-work) to palm himself off as a newly discovered nondescript."[83]

Those of us who today are irritated by the "super-colossal" brand of publicity issuing from the halls of Hollywood might find some consolation, if not actually reassurance, by examining the corresponding outpourings of the inventive minds of the first half of the nineteenth century. For example:

Signor HERVIO NANO

whose celebrity in illustrating that fanciful doctrine, which must, in his person, be called the TRANSMIGRATION OF BODIES, has for many seasons in succession, attracted the crowds to the

[82]C. L. Smith, the scenic artist.

[83]Odell. *Annals*, IV, 368.

Theatre Francais, Paris; the Theatres Drury Lane and Covent Garden, London; the principal Theatres in Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and before all the Courts of Europe. Hervio Nano's personations have been termed by the critics miraculous performances, and throughout Europe he has been announced and considered

THE GREATEST WONDER OF THE DAY!
He is engaged for FOUR NIGHTS ONLY[84]

The notice goes on to say that he will appear in "an eccentric Melo-Dramatic piece called / BIBBO THE APE OF THE ISLAND / founded on incidents in the adventures of the renowned navigator LA PEROUSE." It identifies the island-ape as an ourang-outang.

Bibboo proved to be sufficiently popular to call for two repetitions. After all, he was a pretty suitable rival of the hostile menagerie. The editor of the *Republican* was so impressed that he observed on the nineteenth that his "personifications of that character exceeds all belief, and cannot be described. An ape itself could not do it better." Which is high praise, indeed. This editorial was a blurb for Nano's appearance on that evening in perhaps his most celebrated character:

Last night of Hervio Nano

For the first time in this city, a Dramatic Tale of enchantment written expressly to display

SIGNIOR HERVIO NANO'S
wonderful powers, called the
GNOME FLY

In which he will successfully embody the semblance of a GNOME, A BABOON AND A FLY

Enchantment of the Tower, of the wind
WONDERFUL FLIGHT OF THE FLY, Magical deliverance of the Princess

Entertainments to commence with the petit comedy of the CONQUERING GAME

The whole to conclude with the comic opera of
NO SONG NO SUPPER

[84] *Missouri Republican*, May 15, 1841.

And finally, on Thursday, the farewell benefit. Ludlow had used only four nights; the fifth, of course, was Nano's.

This time as the "Demon Dwarf" he performed his "great flight from the ceiling of the Gallery, crossing the Box, Parquette and Orchestra, to the entire depth of the stage a distance of 150 feet, an act never attempted by any but himself." For the very last he reserved another astonishing feat, "by the mere strength of his arms" ascending a column to the Gallery, traversing the third tier by walking on the front rail of the Boxes, and descending to the stage by the same means that he had used in going up. Who in the circus could compete with this?

Whether or not he did succeed in luring the St. Louisans away from the tent to the Theatre, this monstrosity at least filled up the hiatus between Eaton and the horses, which at last trotted into the ring on the twenty-seventh. They were expected to bring financial relief, but they also brought problems. "If you find there is going to be difficulty about the *Insurance* in consequence of stabling the Horses in the Theatre I advise that you build a rough shed on my lot adjoining—I will not be very hard in the way of rent—& if I sell (as sell I *must*) I can reserve the shed for a time." The postscript already quoted. Smith closed with this advice: "wouldn't alter the Benches of the 2d Tier & Gallery—let them lean over, if there is more than can see without it."

The horses and their riders need not detain us long. After all the hopes pinned to them and despite Mat Field's hopeful prediction, they failed completely to produce the profits anticipated. The truth is the public had probably had enough of that sort of amusement. Ludlow asserts that "for a few nights the receipts were fair, but afterwards began to dwindle, becoming 'small by degrees and beautifully less.' . . . . so we sent away our troupe of equestrians to perform under canvas during the summer and early fall, with instructions to begin in Kentucky, proceeding South through that State, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana, and meet us in New Orleans early in November."[35] Smith in his very brief account says that on their first night in St. Louis they attracted only $169, and on their second but $41.[36] Another case of "best laid plans." "To

[35]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 544.

[36]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 157.

farces, saying, as an inducement, that he would draw a gallery audience for us, and would not be displeasing to other portions of the house. As his demand for the services of the boy was modest—don't start, reader! yes, *modest;* Barnum's demands in those days were modest; he was not the "great showman" then;—well, as I said, his demand being modest, we engaged the boy for five or six nights, without ever seeing him dance, and the result was what Mr. Barnum said it would be.[40]

Smith, on his part, does not mention this engagement. Nor is there any reference in the recollections of either partner to the fact that he filled an engagement with them in St. Louis. Was that how he happened to desert Barnum? Or was the St. Louis dancer the real article? May he not have been the Pittsburgh impostor? There is no way of telling. The latter had been exposed in March, but the future "greatest showman on earth" had gone East, leaving Francis Lynch and Jenkins at large. Dr. Odell testifies that the boy continued to be known as "Master Diamond," and at no time do the St. Louis advertisements designate him as *Jack,* or *Frank* either, for that matter. He is sometimes referred to as "Little Dimond," and it will be recalled that Barnum gives Lynch's age as twelve, and Ludlow the real Diamond's as "about sixteen." These statistics prove nothing, but I know which way my own suspicions point.

Whoever he was, he stayed as long as the horses did, and apparently gave his all, including a burlesque of Fanny Elssler, the most celebrated danseuse of the day. With the departure of the equestrians, he faded into thin air, leaving his little mystery behind him.

During these diversionary excursions the dramatic corps had not been altogether idle, but had contributed a farce or a petit comedy to the program of each evening. What is more, whether or not Ludlow surrendered the stage-management to him, Smith, having come up the river, began a series of appearances. He was seen as Carlitz in *Love in Humble Life,* Sancho in *Lovers' Quarrels,* and Pierce Dubois in *Assignation* or *What Will My Wife Say?* The other dramatic pieces were stock ones, and the various players fitted into their familiar niches.

[40]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 533.

But even the concentration of all the attractions listed above proved insufficient to fill the coffers, and the partners (or possibly Smith alone) kept their eyes and ears—I am tempted in the light of subsequent events to add "their noses"—open for other allurements, and on one rare day in June, one walked uninvited into the managerial office. It might just as truthfully be said that he walked right into the managerial trap, and was captured without a struggle, though, according to Old Sol, with plenty of ceremony. What happened thereafter was not an event to shape the destiny of the American stage, but it is illustrative of the tastes of the times and of the expedients to which desperate managers occasionally resorted. It might be noted too that the 1841 variety was "good *clean* fun." The telling will occupy some little space, but I think it worth while and for most of it, I shall turn to Solomon in all his glory.

He records that in 1826 there was formed in Cincinnati a "Committee of Authors and Amateurs," of which he, Smith, was elected chairman for life.[41]

To entitle a person to membership, it was not absolutely essential that he should belong to the theatrical profession. The press has been largely represented in it, the law has furnished many members and the healing art has contributed its full quota to the very droll organization.

The *objects* in view by the founders of "the committee" were:

1. The *cure* of individuals afflicted with stage madness.

2. To relieve managers of theatres from the sometimes *dangerous* responsibility of directly rejecting worthless pieces offered for representation.

3. To extract (incidentally) from the proceedings of the committee as much fun and amusement as the nature of each case would admit of.

The nature of what occurred in the *sanctum sanctorum* of Ludlow and Smith on that June morning of 1841 can now be guessed.

In the summer of 1841, which was an extremely dull one in our business, among the numerous candidates for theatrical honors, wishing to learn the "trade, art, and mystery" of acting, came one morning a weak, trembling, peaked-nose individual, who looked as though a tolerable breeze would blow him to pieces. With a hesitating,

[41] Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 251-259.

tender voice, he asked to see "the boss of the show." I instantly discovered a "subject" for the committee, and asked him, in a loud voice, his name.

"Macumber—Jeems Macumber," he answered, his knees fairly knocking together when he discovered who it was that addressed him.

"What canst thou do?" I inquired.

After a moment's hesitation, and making two or three vain attempts to swallow something, he gasped twice, and got out this answer: "I can speak orations, and I *think* I could learn to act out plays in a short time."

"Speak orations? What orations canst thou speak?"

"Mark Antony's, John Quincy Adams's Fourth of July, Hannibal's Address to his Army, Patrick Henry's Give me Liberty or Give me Death, Clay's speech on the Declaration of War, Washington's Farewell, Webster's Union Speech, Hayne's—"

"Stop!" I cried: "enough—*more* than enough. And you wish to speak these orations on the stage?"

"Ye-es," he answered; "I am told that I can make heaps of money by speaking 'em."

Smith promptly came to terms with the aspirant for fame, who was duly initiated in "secret ceremonies." Allowances being made for inevitable slips of memory and certain rhetorical embellishments, his account of the neophyte's debut is extremely amusing; but he seems to be in error when he says that it was "duly heralded by the press (nearly all the editors being members of the committee)," for I can find no reference to it in the faithful *Republican,* the only sheet published in these particular months to which I have had access. But subsequent appearances were well advertised under the heading of "Hycondorific Hycondorocums" (June 8 and 9) and other headlines.

. . . . the Fourth of July Oration of Adams was chosen for the occasion. Proper scenery and costumes were selected, and, at the appointed time, Macumber, strictly guarded by the sergeant-at-arms, was stationed back of a *cave-flat,* which at a given signal, opened, and the debutant appeared bodily in the presence of the audience, with a bound, amid tremendous flashes of lightning, the flat instantly closing behind him—and *such* an appearance as he made! Dressed in a suit of regimentals "a world too wide," and considerably too long for him, after the manner of Colonel Pluck or Bombastes Furioso, flourishing a sabre as long as himself, Macumber stood in an attitude of stern defiance (according to instructions) until the awful yells and shouts which greeted him had in some degree subsided; then,

sheathing his sword with a clang, he strutted to the front, made three bows or salaams in the Turkish fashion, gave a stamp with his right foot, and proceeded with the oration, every word of which he spoke, to the very last line, receiving abundance of applause during its delivery from the committee-men stationed in front, as well as from the general audience, all seeming, after a little while, to enter into the "fun of the thing." At the conclusion of the speech, according to orders, the orator placed himself upon a certain place previously chalked out for him, drew his immense sword, and, poising it in the way of a salute, *was let down through a trap,* and so disappeared, a sudden flash of lightning flaming up through the opening in the stage. Cries of *"encore!"* were now heard from all parts of the house, mixed with cries of "Macumber! Macumber!" This call not having been anticipated—calls were not so common *then* as they are now—no provision had been made for getting him out of the cellar except by means of the very trap which let him down; so an order was hastily transmitted through the speaking-trumpet to place him upon the trap, and to caution him to hold himself firm and steady. All being ready, the signal was given for the trap to rise quickly, when Macumber was projected through the stage and shot up into the air at least two yards! The brave fellow, however, lit upon his feet, and resumed that same defiant attitude, with sword drawn, which had brought down such bursts of applause on his appearance through the flats. After stamping two or three times, and bowing low to the audience, he took his stand upon the chalked square, and was again lowered out of sight.

So far as I can tell, this luminary lighted up the stage on seven evenings, June 7 to 12 inclusive. The advertisements are of a piece with the performances. On the eighth, "Mr. H. S. McCumbers, from the Lead Mines, will make his second appearance as Major Downing and recite one of his Letters;" on the ninth, "Third appearance of the hereafter-to-be-celebrated Mr. McCUMBERS from the Lead Mines, who will deliver Gen. Wolfe's Address to his Army;" on the tenth, the benefit of Eldred, the Clown, "As the 4th of July is fast approaching and the destinies decree that he (the Clown) shall not celebrate the National Anniversary in this city, he has engaged (at an enormous expense) the celebrated Mr. McCumbers, from the Lead Mines, to deliver a 4th of JULY ORATION, this night, after which he will vanish in a *blaze of glory;* on the eleventh, "Mr. McCUMBERS, the rapidly becoming celebrated and popular ORATOR, from the Lead Mines and elsewhere, will sing

a song entitled *I walked out one evening, one evening in spring.* After which he will make one of his peculiar exits; and, finally, on the twelfth, "Mr. McCumber, the popular and never-to-be-sufficiently-applauded Lead Mine Actor is engaged at heavy expense, and will make his first appearance in *the Circle,* as Col. Pluck, going through with equestrian feats never before attempted by himself or anyone else; being positively his last appearance."

Having been paid in secret conclave the large sum of twelve dollars, this oratorical genius disappeared forever from the scene, and Smith testifies that he never saw or heard of him again. But he had played his part, and presumably played it to the satisfaction of all, including himself. His pay was certainly not bad for those days, inasmuch as thirty dollars a week was considered an excellent salary for a leading stock actor or actress, and surely he had realized his greatest ambition. The sound of the plaudits which greeted him must have rung happily in his ears for years to come.

Being faced now with a gap of a week before the arrival of the next star, the managers resorted to spectacle and devoted six evenings to the fairy opera *Cherry and Fair Star,* which Ludlow had introduced to St. Louis audiences in his Salt House days back in 1831 and which the McKenzie-Jefferson troupe had given in 1840. How, with the limited facilities of those days, scene-designers and stage-carpenters managed to achieve the effects described I have never been able to comprehend, but that they did accomplish surprising things I also believe we cannot doubt. Perhaps—probably—the visions which seemed so grand to our great-grandparents would be far less impressive in our eyes, accustomed as we are to the wonders wrought by electricity and revolving-stages; yet, even so, they are astonishing, and testify to great ingenuity on the part of the technicians.

Dr. Odell quotes a contemporary description of a New York performance of *Cherry and Fair Star* in 1825, which must have been of a piece with the one under present consideration except that the waterfall in the first scene caught fire and burned up.[42] The St. Louis production involved birds of various colored plumage singing in a fairy grotto, an aloe which opened and expanded its leaves, a

[42]Odell: *Annals,* III, 146.

harbor scene in which the whole stage was (apparently) filled with water and "a superb Grecian galley" sailed down the stage "amidst the acclamations of the spectators on the pier and ramparts," and a burning forest containing a fountain of real water and a dragon. The musical portion of the performance included such numbers as: the Chorus of the Fairies, "Morning Dews the Sun Dispelling"; the Chorus of the Hunters, "Hark, Hark in the Valley and the Dell;" and "Wave the Grecian Flag on High."

It would seem not improbable that in the midst of all this resplendent scenery, human beings would have been lost But, whether they were or not, they were on hand in force, Mrs. Warren as the noble hero, Cherry, and Mrs. Farren as Fair Star, plus Maynard as Sanguinbeck, Farren as Hassanbad, Smith as Topac, and Miss Johnson as Papillo. Of their efforts there is extant (so far as I am aware) no review, but on the fifteenth, the *Republican* observed of the opera: "It was highly applauded last night—the evening being cool the Theatre was very pleasant," and on the next day reported: "The play itself is good, and the scenery is the most rich and beautiful that has ever been presented in this theatre."

Even all this was not considered worth the price of admission, and so was accompanied by the usual brands of farces and petit comedies. By the end of the week these attractions found themselves competing with the Menagerie and Circus of Waring, Raymond, and Weeks, which offered the public nothing less than a "Rhinoceros, or unicorn." Whether or not this was the same or another circus, I do not know.

Then came June 21, and enter at last "the Widow Wiggins."

The Widow Wiggins was a protean comedy in which Mrs. Fanny Fitzwilliam played six different parts, and, when writing Smith, she sometimes playfully used the name in lieu of her regular signature. (Once she saluted him as "Sol Topac Smith.") Mrs. Fitzwilliam appears to have been an exceptionally delightful actress, and a woman of unusual charm and character. Although at first irked by the terms she exacted, both St. Louis managers capitulated with the best of grace and looked back on their relations with her as among the pleasantest of their careers. Dr. Odell quotes from the *Knickerbocker Magazine* for December, 1839, and since the St. Louis papers

fail us where she is concerned, I shall draw upon this source for a comment upon her and her art.

. . . . There is a spirit of humor about her, which displays itself in every sentence she utters, and in every movement of her expressive countenance. Her manner is all mirth and joyousness, and is ever pure, natural, and true to the character which she assumes. . . .[43]

She had turned up in New Orleans unexpectedly early in January under an engagement with Caldwell, but, once they met, they failed to hit it off, and she turned to Ludlow, who was operating his firm's new American Theatre in competition with "the Emperor." At first, Ludlow held off, telling her that he and Smith planned to get along without stars, but he could not long resist her charms and the suspicion of the effect they might have on the paying public. So she was soon, to use Smith's phrase, "cramming the American every night, and throwing from 900 to 1,000 people into fits (of laughter), and causing them to forget the hard times, short crops, and everything else of a disagreeable nature."[44]

At first, before he had met her in the flesh, her demands had outraged Old Sol's frugal soul, and he spread his ire all over the pages of his diary on January 29, 1841, "Recd. intelligence from my partner in N. Orleans that Mrs. Fitzwilliams & Mr. *Buckstone* have arrived in that city. *She* has the modesty [to] demand $250 per night for 10 nights; & Half the receipts of two Benefits, which would yield her for ten nights services $2,500, besides the Benefits, which would be about $1,000 more. Truly professional people nowadays hold themselves at their *full value.*" On February 14, he had this to say: "Mrs. Fitzwilliams, an English actress of considerable note, has been and is playing at our Theatre with great success. Her Benefit produced a receipt of $1,262.50! Half of which went into her pocket, with about $800 more, which constituted the consideration for performing Six nights! [Less, however, than $250 a night.] I should say she is tolerably well paid for her services. She is a most charming actress, that's a fact." A week before, writing Woolf, he had exclaimed, "Isn't she a darling of an actress?" Sol was no unyielding block of granite. The little lady further won his friendship

[43] *Ibid.*, IV, 348.

[44] Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 155; Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 535-536.

by remaining loyal to the American when Caldwell tried to lure her away for a special benefit at his St. Charles. "I do glory in the spunk of little 'Fitz' in sticking to the American."[45]

Once in St. Louis, "Fitz" stayed till the end of the season, playing ten nights, including two benefits. On six of these she starred it alone; on four she shared the spotlight with John Baldwin Buckstone, the English playwright-comedian with whom she had been making joint appearances in the South and with whom she was to be associated professionally throughout the greater part of her career after her return to London.

Buckstone was certainly one of the most prolific of playwrights, having to his credit at least a hundred and fifty plays, including such favorites as *Luke the Laborer, Ellen Wareham, Agnes de Vere, The Ice Witch, The Irish Lion,* and the farce of *Damon and Pythias.* He had also a long career as an actor and as a London manager both before and after his not over-successful tour of this country. He made a most favorable impression upon Smith, who pronounced him "a very chaste, excellent actor" and added "I positively reverence the little fellow."[46] Ludlow also was more than pleased, especially with the comedian's joint appearances with Mrs. Fitzwilliam. "It was really a treat to see these two artists perform. They had so frequently acted together, and understood each other so well, that they mingled pleasantly their comic touches of humor and facial expression, producing a combination that quite charmed their hearers, and rendered them insensible to every thing but the exquisite acting before them."[47] This was in New Orleans. St. Louis, which was by no means the theatrical centre the Louisiana city was, had only four opportunities to enjoy this teamwork.

Mrs. Fitzwilliam opened in Garrick's farce, *The Irish Widow,* and Buckstone's *The Widow Wiggins,* in both of which she sang a number of songs. On her second evening she played and sang Clarisse in Bayley's "elegant petit comedy of the BARRACK ROOM," and repeated *The Widow Wiggins,* described in the *Republican* as a "monologue." The paper reported (how reliably I cannot say) good

[45]Sol Smith to N. M. Ludlow, May 12, 1841.
[46]Diary of Sol Smith, February 14, 1841.
[47]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 538-539.

business. "To judge from the audience last night, we would say that Mrs. Fitzwilliams' engagement will prove equally as successful as at New Orleans. The house was crowded with a fashionable audience, and her *debut* was greeted with very flattering applause." On Wednesday came Moncrieff's *Foreign Airs and Native Graces* in which "she played Emily Staples, obliged to assume several disguises, including that of a French *danseuse* and that of an Italian opera singer."[48] Dr. Odell points out that when she appeared in this play (which had been written especially for her) in New York, the *Knickerbocker* pronounced her singing "a brilliant exhibition of the most difficult music, to come up to which, the best prima donnas with whom we have been blessed since Mrs. WOOD might strive in vain." She also repeated *The Irish Widow*. The *Republican* reported that there had been "a perfect squeeze both nights of her appearance." On Thursday she played Miss Peggy in *The Country Girl* and Madame Manette in *Mischief Making*, two more of her star roles. For her benefit on Friday she repeated *Foreign Airs* and *The Widow Wiggins*.

An editorial in the *Republican* on Thursday, doing spadework for the benefit, proved a dead give-away of the reliability of the ordinary blurbs. Had the previous notices accorded with the facts, the Theatre would have been crowded, but this is what the editor had to say when he got down to business:

THE THEATRE—We are aware that from some cause or other, probably the hardness of the times, the theatre has not, until a few nights past, been very liberally patronized. Mrs. Fitzwilliams' presence has, however, infused new life, and the houses have been better than during the preceding part of the season—This is pretty good evidence that she is known and appreciated by the public. But there is still space for more and we are surprised not to see more present. At no time has there been a greater attraction on our boards. . . . The repeated encores which greeted her from a fashionable house, manifested, in a language not to be misunderstood, that she was a favorite in no ordinary estimation. In this piece her singing was *encored* eight or nine times, rather too great a draught on her ability; but nevertheless a manifestation which could not be otherwise than flattering to her.

[48]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 348.

This is all very complimentary, but how about the "perfect squeeze" a few nights before? But we have even more positive evidence. "'Things go most execrably here in Syracuse, my Pythias'—or, rather, in St. Louis—in the theatrical line. We have sustained heavy losses during the season just closing; and if we experience no favorable change during our fall season, the 'fortune' every body insists we made in New Orleans, and every body can't be wrong, will be soon swept away by the expenses of this extensive establishment. . . . Fanny Fitzwilliam has brought us up a little during the present week. She and Buckstone 'go it' together next week, and then we close for the season."[49] Ludlow says in his book that Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Buckstone "played a two weeks' engagement [not exactly a fact] to very fair business, considering the times, but not equal to what they would have done under more favorable circumstances."[50] Writing to Mat Field on June 23, he said: "Mrs. Fitz—second night (last night) one hundred *less* than the first night—only 'think of that Master Brooke'—Every body delighted with her—'but bless you they wont pye.'"

About Buckstone's brief visit there is little to report. I have come across only one brief comment, a few of the familiar editorial kind words to the effect that the performance of the preceding evening (June 29) was "the best thing we have seen for a long time," the truth of which assertion there seems to be no good reason to doubt. He opened on the twenty-sixth in two of his own works, *Married Life,* a comedy, and *A Kiss in the Dark,* a farce. In the former he was supported by Mrs. Farren. On Monday he and Mrs. Fitzwilliam 'went it' together in two novelties. The first was a farce entitled *My Little Adopted* in which the lady played Laurette Seymour, and sang "The Fox and the Grapes" and "Robin Adair" to her own harp accompaniments. Buckstone was John Dibbs and Mrs. Farren, Rose. Then came the former's "last new piece," *Snapping Turtles* or *Mr. and Mrs. T. T. Timms,* in which they assumed all the roles. Ludlow in *The Promissory Note* brought down the curtain.

[49]Sol Smith to E. Woolf, June 25, 1841 (Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 160).

[50]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 544.

The Tuesday bill which pleased the editor was made up of Lemon's *Out of Place* with Mrs. Fitzwilliam as Sophy Sollikens, and a repetition of *Snapping Turtles*. Between the two, Mr. Lavette, according to his wont, danced—this time a sailor's hornpipe. The following evening they introduced what was termed "a new Farce," *The Christening*. It was new to St. Louis, but New York had seen it more than five years before.[51] The names of the characters played by the stars are intriguing—Mrs. Dolly Lovechild and Mr. Hopkins Twiddy. There were also repetitions of *Out of Place* and *My Little Adopted*. Thursday was devoted to *Foreign Airs and Native Graces* "(positively) for the last time," and the "comedy altered from the SOLDIERS DAUGHTER entitled WIDOW McKENZIE," which gave the lady a chance to sing several Scotch songs. Buckstone played Timothy Quaint, Ludlow Frank Heartall, and Farren Governor Heartall. On Friday Buckstone took his benefit in his new three-act drama *The Banished Star* or *A Leaf from the Life of an Actress*. In this little piece, written especially for her by her associate, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, as a former prima donna disguised as a peasant, gave imitations of the great soprano Malibran, the singer Rubini, and the famous *danseuse* Fanny Elssler. (Was there any connection between Mrs. Fitzwilliam's song, "O could I from my Prison Break," and the escape from jail of four Negro murderers? It will be noted that on the evening of the day of their execution the Theatre featured the Hanging Scene in *George Barnwell*.) Then the beneficiary displayed himself as Inkpen in *Tom Noddy's Secret*, "his original character," opposite Mrs. Fitzwilliam. The joint engagement was brought to a close with the spring season in the form of Mrs. Fitzwilliam's benefit made up of selected scenes from her various pieces plus *The Deadshot* in which both she and Buckstone took part. This was on Monday, July 5.

On Saturday the stars had had a night off while Smith played his great role, Mawworm (what a name!) in *The Hypocrite*. As this was the eve of the Fourth, the band contributed a "Grand National Overture," and a "Grand Transparency" was "exhibited in front of the Theatre."

[51]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 80.

Officially the season had now closed. But this fact did not preclude further performances. A number of the most prominent and respected citizens, aware, as they said in a letter addressed to the managers, that the season had been a disastrous one, proffered them a complimentary benefit. (Perhaps they had not forgotten the firemen.) This gesture meant that these gentlemen would undertake to sell out the house. Back in St. Louis on a visit, Mat Field lent his services to the cause and was billed as the star of the evening as Peter Spyk in *The Loan of a Lover,* with the two Farrens. Each manager was also featured, Ludlow as Sir David Dunder in *Ways and Means,* Mrs. Russell playing Lady Dunder, and Smith as Sancho in *Lovers' Quarrels.*

But the end was still not yet—not quite.

On July 10 there was a big outdoor event in St. Louis, in its way far more dramatic than any show in the Theatre or the Museum. It was free and it attracted a much larger crowd than could have been squeezed into any house of entertainment. People came not only from the city itself, but from the surrounding countryside. Perhaps St. Louis had never before been so crowded. The *Republican* of the twelfth noted that in the crowd were many fine equipages with "ladies" in them, who later turned out to be not what they had seemed.

The occasion was nothing less than the public execution of four Negroes. The affair was carried off in the grand manner of those days. There was a procession to the gallows. Then a clergyman delivered a sermon, after which each of the condemned made a few appropriate remarks, more or less on the theme that "crime doesn't pay." These ceremonies completed, they were launched into eternity. (The severed heads were later exhibited in a local pharmacy.)

Among those present was Smith. Perhaps he went to get a pointer or two. At all events, that evening the Theatre regaled "a large party of ladies and gentlemen from ALTON, who had selected this evening to attend the Theatre, (not being aware that the season had closed)," with the tragedy of *George Barnwell* with (for the first time) the Hanging Scene. To take any possible bitter taste out of

[52] *Missouri Republican,* July 10, 1841. Alton is located about twenty miles above St. Louis on the Illinois side of the river.

the mouths of the guests from Illinois the program was concluded with *Turn Out*, in which farce the partners made one of their rare joint appearances, the senior as Restive, the junior as George Redtail. "The steamer Eagle will remain to convey the Alton party home after the performance."[82]

The complimentary benefit was not the only relief accorded the hardpressed managers. The stockholders of the Theatre also contributed, for Smith noted in his diary on the tenth that he had attended a meeting at which these gentlemen had reduced the rent "to 6 p.c. on the cost of the property provided we would extend our lease four years."

VI

"WISE MEN NE'ER SIT AND WAIL THEIR WOES"

Fall of 1841

The spring season having resulted in serious losses to the firm, Ludlow and Smith were faced with the necessity of making these good before departing down the river for their winter season in the South. Not being men to accept defeat, they set about employing their long and rich experience to better their circumstances, and probably there were in the country no two men better equipped to tackle the job.

On August 25 they opened their fall season in a blaze of fresh paint. The young "scenic artist," C. L. Smith, had transformed into new splendor the auditorium originally decorated by his namesake, J. R. Smith. The *Republican* of the twenty-fourth contains a long and detailed description of the new glories, from which I quote a few lines.

In searching for his leading feature and grand effect of the *tout ensemble,* Mr. Smith has aimed at once to be national and local. Likenesses of the various Presidents of the Union adorn the panel work of the first and second tiers, that of Washington occupying the centre place in front of the stage. The third circle is decorated with the old mythological devices expressive of the connection with the drama. The dome above is also wrought out with much ingenuity of design. The arms of the Union form a beautiful centre, from which nine richly executed panels divulge, each representing miniature national emblems, born aloft by flying Zephyrs and Cupids.

The curtain was most impressive, depicting a statue of Washington modelled after Canova's figure with "the proper costume" substituted for the Roman toga, standing in the opening of a massive arch through which could be seen a sweeping panorama of the Mississippi and St. Louis. On a piece of painted drapery from the dome to the proscenium arch was "the bust of Missouri's venerable Governor, Gen. Clark, the early mountain traveler, now no more." The editor, or whoever was responsible for the article, was nothing less than ecstatic.

Somewhat less aesthetic and more practical was another feature of the new season. "During the vacation," says Ludlow, "we came to the conclusion to try the experiment of reducing the prices of admission to the theatre, from seventy-five cents to fifty for dress-circle and parquet, from fifty to thirty cents for second tier or family-circle, leaving the gallery at the old price, twenty-five cents."[1] Of this expedient he expresses his disapproval. "Such a course generally increases the number of visitors, but not the aggregate amount of cash receipts, and invariably shows a diminution in intelligence and average respectability of the audience. Such was the result with us in this instance." This account does not accord with Smith's version set forth in a letter to Edwin Woolf dated October 21, two weeks before the end of the season. "The half-price system successful—gained $600 or $700 on the season, in place of *losing* as many thousands, as we did in the spring season."[2] This letter was written at the time, and I am inclined to accept it as more reliable than Ludlow's written many years later, especially in view of the many other errors in the latter's narrative. On the other hand, it is not impossible that the situation changed during the last two weeks of the season, though I think that in such a case Smith would have commented on the fact when he published the letter in question.

The Ludlow and Smith establishment was a very considerable one. Smith in one of his letters calls attention to a difference between the practice of the Western firm and that of those in the Eastern states, with the possible exception of Niblo's in New York: ". . . they all (it appears to me) *close* whenever it suits the convenience of the managers, without the least consideration for their companies, while we go on sometimes at a loss of thousands."[3] These facts should in all fairness be borne in mind when we recall the accusations of closeness aimed at the partners.

There were also changes in the personnel of the company. This was strengthened very considerably by the addition of Benedict, better known as "Ben," De Bar and his wife, better known as "Mrs. Conduit." The former was an English actor, at this time thirty-two

[1]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 544.
[2]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 160.
[3]Sol Smith to Edwin Woolf, June 27, 1841. *Ibid.*

years old, who had come to this country in 1834 and made his American debut at the St. Charles in New Orleans the following year. By this time he had attained a reputable place on the stage, both as an actor and as a stage-manager. In later years he was to be closely identified with St. Louis, when in 1855 he stepped into the vacancy created by the retirement of Ludlow and Smith four years before, and carried on as the proprietor of one of the outstanding stock companies of the country until his death in 1877. (He had taken over the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans on the dissolution of his predecessors' firm in 1853.) As an actor he was especially famous for his Falstaff. Smith, who died before De Bar won his fame in that role, thought Strapado, the drunken corporal in *The Dumb Girl of Genoa,* his greatest part. "I do think I have gone to the St. Charles Theatre at least twenty times to see this truly wonderful performance, and, moreover, I have no hesitation in saying that if Ben had not grown so fat and unwieldy, I would go twenty times more to see him play the same part."[4] His wife was a singer and actress who had come into some notoriety a few years before when Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wood, the celebrated English singers, had got themselves into very hot water by failing to volunteer for her benefit at the Park Theatre, and, instead, giving a concert of their own at the same hour. This occurred before her marriage to De Bar.[5]

New too were Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Germon, who, it will be recalled, had been members of the McKenzie-Jefferson company which had played a brief engagement in Concert Hall in the spring of 1840, and which had already contributed Sankey to the corps. Mrs. Germon was a niece of Joseph II and a first cousin to the most famous of all Rip Van Winkles. Neither of these young people occupied an exalted post, being rarely entrusted with leading business and not infrequently seeing their names omitted from the published casts. (By this I do not mean that they did not act, but merely that they were not regarded as important enough to be advertised.) Finally, throughout this season Smith remained on deck and played a more

[4] Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 156.

[5] I believe that Hyde and Conard's *Encyclopedia and History of St. Louis* errs when it says that De Bar first appeared in St Louis in 1838. Not only have I found no reference to any such appearance, but the advertisement in the *Republican* of August 25, 1841, states definitely that this is his first.

active part in the performances than he had done for some time. What is more, he and his partner were often seen on the stage together. Other newcomers were unimportant, some of them not identified by either partner.

Some few pages back I quoted Ludlow as having informed Mrs. Fitzwilliam, when she applied for an engagement in New Orleans during the previous winter, that he and Smith had resolved to try to get along without stars. We have seen that when it came to that lady, the managers broke down and engaged her as well as a few other guests. In their fall season they endeavored to go it on their own, and to some extent succeeded. About sixty performances were given, only twenty-eight (so far as I can tell) involving outsiders. Of these, one was Mat Field, the other a demonstrator of hypnotism, each participating in a single bill. At first, De Bar, who was an uncommonly good actor, served well in lieu of a star; in fact, in the advertisement for the first night his name is printed in capitals (as is his wife's on the following evening).

De Bar's debut was accomplished, on the opening night, in the role of Robert Macaire, which had been played during the spring season by J. S. Browne. Mrs. Farren was again Marie; this time, Saunders and Sankey were announced as Jacques Strop and Germeuil respectively.

During the 1840's, St. Louis, like many other American cities, was in the throes of a grand controversy on the subject of hypnotism, or "animal magnetism" as it was still often termed. Was it or was it not valid? It had its proponents and its opponents, who argued back and forth in meetings and out of meetings. Public demonstrations were held and leading men lined up on one side or the other. Would it or would it not prove the answer to the prayer for some form of anesthesia? Now, as has been shown before, Ludlow and Smith were not the gentlemen to overlook opportunities at their very doorstep. So from time to time they resurrected Mrs. Inchbald's old, but ever-popular farce, *Animal Magnetism* or *Doctors Will Differ*, which had been introduced to St. Louis nearly a quarter of a century before in the old Thespian Theatre on Main Street. So out it came again on the opening night of this season, and, to see that justice was done and no favoritism shown, each partner under-

took the part of a disputing physician, Smith as Doctor Press-on, and Ludlow as Doctor La Fleur. Maynard played Mr. Editor. A Miss Johnson was the Ella, and a Miss Warren, the Lisette. The performance started at eight, and the season was on.

Evidently the public enjoyed the burlesque, parody, satire, or whatever one wishes to call it, for it was repeated on the thirty-first. But the management could do better still. On September 14, it engaged a professional hypnotist, one "Doctor" Preston, to "Magnetize a Lady in presence of the audience in order to establish the verity of the mysterious faculty of *Animal Magnetism* and rebut the *redicule* [*sic*] and burlesque attempted to be cast upon it by unbelievers."[8] This defence, whether sincere or of the tongue-in-the-cheek-variety, having been bodily laid before the audience, what did the managers do? They again presented themselves as the two doctors aforementioned. "During the piece, Doctors L. & S. will give some peculiar EXPERIMENTS of their own, which will be calculated to convince the most sceptical that 'SOME THINGS CAN BE DONE AS WELL AS OTHERS.'" The curtain-raiser of the evening was *The Old English Gentleman*, with Farren as Squire Broadlands, Mrs. Farren as Fanny, and De Bar, still following in the footsteps of Browne, as Horace Ametrius. Mrs. De Bar made her bow on the second night of the season as Lisette in *The Swiss Cottage*, which shared the bill with the comedy of *Alice* in which Sol was the Dingle. I have found no newspaper comments on either of the De Bars.

The next seven performances—since I have not seen a copy of the paper of September 1, I cannot tell what happened then—were given over to more or less tried-and-true pieces, the two partners and the De Bars being active participants. On August 28, St. Louisans had their first chance to enjoy De Bar's inimitable Strapado, his wife playing the dumb girl of the title. In fact, this lady appears to have been very versatile, ready with pantomime or song, whichever was required. The night before she had played the mute Myrtillo in *The Broken Sword*. But when a musical piece like *Guy Mannering*, for instance (September 3), was on the bill, she was on hand with Julia Mannering and her song. And in two months she was

[8] *Missouri Republican*, September 14, 1841.

dead of tuberculosis! It was in the Scott opera that Germon first stepped on the stage of the St. Louis Theatre, appearing as Bertram ("with songs"). The advertisement in the *Republican* presents an unusual and surprising feature: the name of Maynard, who played Mannering, is printed in capitals, whereas those of Smith, the Farrens, and the De Bars were not so distinguished. Explain that who can.

Although most of the plays given between August 25 and September 6 were old stand-bys, three were at least almost novelties, the first and most important being Bulwer's *Money,* which was done on August 30 with the following cast: Evelyn, Maynard; Sir Frederick, De Bar; Sir John Vesey, Farren; Graves, Sankey; Sharp, Saunders; and Lady Clara, Mrs. Farren. The new comedy would seem not to have interested St. Louisans as much as it did playgoers elsewhere, since it was not repeated unless on one or both of the two evenings for which I have no record. The other two "first-timers," which were offered together on September 4, obviously fared no better. The first of these was *The Conscript* or *The Emperor and Soldier* (which had been done years before at the National Theatre in New York under the title of *Napoleon,* the subtitle being the same).[7] The part of Napoleon in this petit comedy was assumed by Germon, others on the roster being Maynard, De Bar, Sankey, Farren, Saunders, and Mrs. Farren. In *The Merry Loafer,* with which the program ended, both Ludlow and Mrs. De Bar contributed songs.

On September 6 came the first star, "Gentleman George" Barrett, returning just a year after his first visit. He played six nights, not including his benefit, which occurred on the thirteenth. His first role was Ambrose in *The Two Friends,* Maynard being the Herbert, Germon the Valentine, and Mrs. Farren the Elinor. Rose, which in 1837 Mrs. De Bar (still Mrs. Conduit) had played to Barrett's Ambrose in New York was here assigned to Mrs. Germon.[8] Barrett was also in the cast of the after-piece, *His Last Legs* (another novelty) as O'Callaghan, supported by Mrs. Russell and

[7] Odell: *Annals,* IV, 467.
[8] *Ibid.,* IV, 168.

De Bar. On Wednesday he took part in another new piece, *The Irish Attorney* or *Galway Practice in 1770*.

Thursday (September 9) brought another of the probably very creditable performances of *The School for Scandal* which it was the good fortune of St. Louisans to see during the first half the nineteenth century and which, I suspect, we should have difficulty in duplicating today. Barrett, there is every reason to believe, was well equipped to interpret Sir Peter, and Mrs. Farren was probably a very competent Lady Teazle. In all likelihood Farren—if "steady"— did a good job as Sir Oliver. Ludlow was, of course, too old to be wholly convincing as Charles, but he was an experienced comedian and thoroughly at home in the part. Smith certainly was more than equal to Crabtree, and De Bar to Sir Benjamin Backbite, the role of his American debut. We have Smith's testimony that Sankey was exceptionally good in old men's parts, and there is good reason to conclude that Rowley was well taken care of. These, I should surmise, were the pillars of the performance; about the others I am more hesitant to hazard an opinion. They were Maynard as Joseph, Mrs. De Bar as Mrs. Candour, Mrs. Russell as Lady Sneerwell (I should think an instance of bad casting), Mrs. Warren as Maria, Germon as Careless, Saunders as Moses, and Sutherland, Wright, Johnson, Rose, and Lavette (the dancer) in smaller roles. (Miss Johnson and Mrs. Germon were reserved for the after-piece, *The Cave-Ite*.)

In one respect I am quite ready to qualify my appraisal of this performance. Despite the talents and the experience of several members of the cast, I cannot think that everything can have "clicked" (to use a modern word) nearly so well as would one of ours today. It will be remembered that Ludlow was delighted with the teamwork of Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Buckstone, based on their long association in the parts they played or in similar ones. Such can hardly have been the case in the present instance. Some of the people, it is true, had worked together for some years, but others were new to the aggregation. Furthermore, *The School for Scandal* had not been acted for months, and there can have been no more than one rehearsal. So it would be to expect a miracle if one looked for a smooth, well-integrated performance.

Barrett next essayed Tom Tape in *The Englishman in India* and, for the last night of his engagement, Goldfinch in *The Road to Ruin*, one of the most popular of the current dramatized sermons. De Bar undertook Harry Dornton, and Farren his father, with Mrs. Farren as Sophia, Sankey as Silky, and Saunders as Jacob. "There are many," quoth the *Republican* (September 11), "who are already to [*sic*] well acquainted with the broadroad, in reality; but as this is only a fancy sketch, it may be more interesting to those than to any others; at any rate, it is an excellent play, that has a moral in it, from which may be drawn very beneficial lessons, and may cause some heedless youths of our acquaintance to pause in their downward course." The question is, would they pause long enough to come to see a play which they knew beforehand to be a stern warning aimed at their brotherhood? Perhaps they may have been enticed to Third and Olive by the after-piece, the little musical play of *The Poor Soldier*, long a favorite, with De Bar, Smith, Farren, Mrs Russell, and the Germons.

On Monday, the thirteenth, Gentleman George said au revoir in three plays, not an unusual procedure at benefits, his three parts being Belmour in *Is He Jealous*[8] (opposite Mrs. De Bar), Charles Paragon in *Perfection* (opposite Mrs. Farren), and O'Callaghan in *His Last Legs*.

Two nights later over the horizon rose the so-called "Star of the West." This was the celebrated Mrs. Alex Drake, who had now for nearly twenty years reigned as the great tragedy queen of the Western stage. She and Ludlow had started their careers together when, as tyro-members of the company of her future father-in-law, Old Sam Drake, they had travelled by wagon and flatboat from Albany to Kentucky twenty-six years before. She was Frances Ann Denny then. Later, soon after her marriage, she had established herself as an actress of great power and become a star of considerable magnitude. Although Ludlow was mistaken when he wrote that she was with the Drake company when it visited St. Louis in 1820, she had paid the city several visits during the 1830's; she had, however, been absent since 1837.[9]

[9]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 188 and 191. In my *The Theatre on the Frontier*, p. 201, I express the mistaken opinion that her visit in 1837 was her last to St. Louis.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Drake had been in town the previous spring and, after reaching Louisville in April, wrote Smith expressing her regret that she had not had the pleasure of seeing him, "as it might have led to making some arrangement, for my playing a farewell engagement with you in that city. I have settled my family in Covington, and shall travel most of the summer myself.—If you have any nights open I wish you would reserve them for me either immediately after my engagement here or after my return from the north."[10] What had been the matter with Ludlow? Why had she not treated with him? Or is it possible that she had and that they had not come to terms? But if she had, she would surely have said so. In the end she did get her nights, but not until September.

She made her re-entry in that most depressing of roles, Mrs. Haller in Kotzebue's *The Stranger*, Ludlow assuming the title role and Smith that of Peter. De Bar and Farren also took part, as Francis and Solomon respectively. There was one member of the cast, a debutant, who did not get his name into the published advertisements. "Master *Thaddeus Smith* aged 16 months dressed in a jacket & trowsers made his first (and probably his only) appearance on the stage, in the character of William Wintersen."[11] This may not have been the only time he braved the footlights, but he did not, like his half-brothers, Mark and Sol, Jr., make the stage his vocation; he became, instead, a civil engineer.[12]

On her second night Mrs. Drake was seen in one of her most successful roles, Madame Clermont in Dimond's *Adrian and Orilla* or *A Mother's Vengeance,* a sentimental melodrama which no one, seemingly, had attempted in St. Louis since 1838. Her support included Maynard as Adrian, Mrs. Farren as Orilla, De Bar as Lothaire (with a song), and Saunders as Michael. When she had last enacted this part, a "communicant" had poured out restrained encomiums in the *Republican*, but this time no critic, enthusiastic or not, lifted his head—or, rather, his pen.[13] All we know is that the afterpiece was, appropriately enough, *Frightened to Death*, with De

[10]Frances Ann Drake to Sol Smith, April 24, 1841.

[11]*Missouri Republican,* September 15, 1841.

[12]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 235. Thaddeus Sanford Smith was one of Sol's three sons by his second wife, Elizabeth Pugsley Smith, whom he had married in 1839.

[13]Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier,* 201.

Bar and the Farrens. In what, if anything, the star appeared on Friday, I cannot say, since I have found no paper of that date, but for her benefit on Saturday, September 18, she chose Tobin's *The Honey Moon*, than which no other "old war hoss" was more staid and reliable, taking, of course, the part of Juliana. Ludlow was the Duke Aranza, and Smith, the Mock Duke. (I wonder who was putting the "ads" in the papers with Ludlow's name in "caps" and Smith's in lowercase.) Perhaps as a sequel to *The Honey Moon*, Mrs. Drake recited "The Scolding Wife Reclaimed," and concluded the evening with *The Wedding Day*. Quite a matrimonial evening! I wonder if these ladies really believed all these *opera* had to say about the proper submissiveness of the distaff side?

The interregnum which ensued after Mrs. Drake's departure and which lasted about two weeks was not without its interesting features. One of these was the new and lavish production of Louisa Medina's dramatization of Bulwer's *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which was first given on Septemer 20, ran for six consecutive evenings, and had a seventh performance (on October 2) before the scenery was finally sent to the storehouse. This work, which had been introduced to the New York stage in 1835, enjoyed a great vogue perhaps as much because of the public love for spectacle and display as for any other reason.[14] Smith had put it on with the New Orleans contingent of the company the previous spring with great, if with understandably surprising, *éclat*. "This morning," he wrote Ludlow on May 1, "was the first rehearsal, & tomorrow will be the *last*, as we must play it tomorrow night! We *may* stumble through it decently—I don't know." He must, therefore, have been somewhat startled by the critical reaction of two men who assuredly knew whereof they spoke, for two days later he added this bit: "Buckstone & Scott high in praise of *Last Days*. They say that the last scene excels anything they have ever seen in the same piece."[15]

[14]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 31.

[15]J. M. Scott, actor and manager. "J. M. Scott is here, staying with me a few days. He is not so genteel a figure as he was 22 years ago—but I believe he is a good fellow, I like him; & have endeavored during the past season, to show him some little civilities in the way of business—Sending him the 'stars,' making engagements for him, etc. He is about my own age, but looks much more reverend. He has contrived, (and I am glad of it,) to preserve from the wreck which Theatricals have experienced a snug & comfortable *home* for himself & interesting family. May he live long & prosper!" (Diary of Sol Smith, May 8, 1841).

The advertisement in the *Republican* (September 20) gives, not only the names and roles of the chief actors involved, but also those of the technicians, an evidence of the importance ascribed to the spectacular nature of the production. The scenery was, of course, from the hand of C. L. Smith "and assistant." The music was composed by C. H. Mueller. Even those in charge of the machinery, dresses, and properties were identified, C. W. Crannels, Nelson, and De Gentzen. As for the *dramatis personae:*

Arbaces - Farren	Niger - Johnson
Glaucus - Maynard	Saga of Vesuvius - Mrs. Farren
Lydon - De Bar	Nydia - Mrs. De Bar
Burbo - Sankey	Ione - Mrs. Warren

Although the press was full of recriminations on the subject of President Tyler's second Bank Bill veto, the *Republican* did find space for a brief notice. It began with the statement that the "splendid drama of the Last Days of Pompeii is received with unrivalled success. On Monday, at least one thousand persons were in the Theatre, indeed we have seldom seen a better house." Obviously, as is evident from what follows, this is a legitimate review and not a "blurb" fathered by the management of the Theatre. "The scenery, decorations, &, have been got up in a style creditable to any Theatre; and the acting, though not faultless, is good. It is a pity that Mr. Farren cannot pronounce his words so that they can be understood by his audience. In this he is more in fault playing Arbaces, than in any character we have ever seen him attempt." Had George Percy been tippling again? Probably. Usually the tale of the blind Nydia was saved to serve as the *pièce de résistance* of the evening, but on the twenty-third it was given first "in order to allow the younger branches of families to witness it and retire early."

On the twenty-fourth the managers announced that the " 'experiment' having demonstrated that the HALF PRICE SYSTEM operates favorably to the establishment, it will be continued until further notice—the managers still reserving the right to restore the old prices whenever they shall deem it expedient to do so." Three nights later, Sol had a benefit as Dominee Sampson in *Guy Mannering*. He even joined in the singing, for instance, in the first act

finale, "A Fox Jumped over the Parson's Gate." Henry Bertram fell to the lot of Germon, Dandie Dinmont to De Bar, and Gilbert Glossin to Farren. Who played Dirk I cannot tell, but Mary Ann Farren tried her luck with the part of Meg Merrilies, not yet identified with the great Charlotte Cushman. "In order to give effect to this splendid composition, the whole Vocal strength of the company will be called into requisition, including the members of the company which perform characters in the piece." This statement apparently refers, not to the "opera" as a whole, but to the concerted number of "The Chough and the Crow" and "a full chorus of Gipsies." It does not seem to have mattered whether or not these various players could really sing. I doubt if Smith was any mastersinger, but he had compensations to offer, and so between the pieces he threw in "the once popular song of the PLOUGHMAN TURNED ACTOR." In conclusion, Ludlow came to the aid of his partner as Sir David Dunder in *Be Quiet—I Know It.*

Then, after two nights of *Cherry and Fair Star* with a few changes in the cast, De Bar taking over Topac, and his wife, the Fairy Queen, came one of the most interesting features of the fall season. At least, it seems, for certain reasons, interesting to me; it patently did not so impress St. Louis audiences. This was the local premiere of *Quasimodo, the Bell Ringer of Notre Dame*, an "operatic Drama, from the French of Victor Hugo, with appropriate scenery, dresses and appointments." Whether or not this novelty was the melodrama generally known as "Esmeralda" with music added, I have no way of telling, but a note in the paper suggests that mortals too may move in mysterious ways their wonders to perform. "The music of the piece," says the *Republican*, "is selected and adapted from the popular German operas of C. M. Von Weber, by C. H. Mueller." The scenery, dresses, and appointments may quite possibly have been wholly appropriate, but I can scarcely say the same for the music. Just why Von Weber's characteristically German scores should have been considered suitable accompaniment for this Gallic play, perhaps Mr. Mueller knew. If so, he probably had a monopoly of the understanding. But, whatever the incongruities, the "operatic drama" was given and almost as promptly withdrawn. It served Mrs. De Bar as a benefit the following evening, and then

was seen and heard no more. She probably liked it because Esmeralda fell to her lot, and the hunchback to that of her husband. Let us hope she did and that she was given a good send-off, because she was almost at the end of her road. After three more appearances, she too was seen and heard no more. With her in the cast were Farren as the Arch-deacon Frollo, Saunders as Gringoire, and Mrs. Farren as St. Gudule.

On October 4, Mrs. Farren had the pleasure of singing (for her first benefit) "Home Sweet Home" in Payne's *Clari, the Maid of Milan*, supported in her performance of the title role by her husband, Smith, De Bar, and Saunders.

Then, on the next evening, Dan Marble returned to St. Louis for another fall engagement. It was a short one, only five nights, and his repertoire was almost identical with that of the year before. But his visit did lead to a controversy and, apparently, to some hard feelings. For his benefit on October 11, a bill composed of scenes from his favorite plays, plus a one-act piece called sometimes *Advertising for a Wife* and sometimes *Ebenezer Venture*, the prices were restored "to the old standard." According to the *Republican* (October 9), this move was made "in compliance with numerous requests from the friends of the gentleman, and other well-wishers of the establishment." To this action the paper took exception. "Had the change been made for one of our stock actors it might have been tolerated; but for a *star*, for an occasional visitor, however celebrated, we think it unfair, and on this account alone wish him a slim house."

On the thirteenth the editor returned to the charge.

MR. MARBLE'S BENEFIT.—It is probable that this gentleman's benefit, on Monday night last, was, in dollars and cents, quite equal to what it would have been if there had been no change of price, but in point of numbers it was far below what it would have been had no alteration been made. While we were constrained, by a sense of right, to approbate the decision of the public, we confess our regret that it was so. Mr. Marble is deservedly a favorite with the St. Louis audience; the spontaneous call after the curtain fell, sufficiently attests the high place he has in the regard of this community—it was an honor we have never seen conferred on any other actor, on the first night of his engagement. If he is re-engaged, or if he takes a Benefit here, under different circumstances, he will find that it was the principle, and not him, that the public disapproved.

The writer concludes with a defence of the managers, who, he says were ill advised, not perhaps so much in making the change as in not taking the public into their confidence. They should have explained "that their engagement was made with Mr. Marble long previous to the reduction of the prices, and without any expectation of their being changed." He also added that the firm had suffered severe losses during the first part of the season, and that they had thought, not unreasonably, that the occasion was a good one on which to do some recouping.

P. S. Marble did play a re-engagement of two nights and a benefit, and the prices were not raised.

Before this *amende honorable* was made, the Theatre was the scene of a production such as we today, for better or worse, seldom or never see. In the first half of the nineteenth century elaborate burlesques of even the most tragic plays were not at all uncommon and often participated in by the foremost actors and actresses of the day. This one, a travesty of the ever popular opera *Cinderella*, the work of Mat Field (now assistant editor of the New Orleans *Picayune*) was much the most elaborate staged in St. Louis up to that time.

SCHINDER ELLER

This piece, produced on Tuesday night, at the Theatre, is a native travestie, and one of the first, we believe, distinguished by genuine paternity in the Far West. It was written in this city, designed for representation in this city and New Orleans, and the Author is a well known son of the buskin, who was for several seasons a student of the Drama amongst us, and graduated honorably. All parodies and burlesques labour still under the inconveniences and difficulties of prudish frowns and hypocritical objections; but the humorist who has furnished us with the present dish of fun, seems to possess a spirit which can conceive a soul existing in the ludicrous as well as in the sublime. . . .

The conceit of the piece is entirely built upon the late agitation of Animal Magnetism in this city, and the author carries out (in fancy) the romantic *clairvoyance* of Mesmer to the fullest extent that its German originator, or any of his followers, ever dare advocate. The thing, throughout, is a pure bit of humor, harmlessly using the questionable science as a vehicle for dramatic merriment, and showing no indications of satirical censorship levelled at those inclined to faith in the extraordinary revelations of Mesmerism. . . .

Mesmer, himself, is prominent in the piece, occupying the position of the Fairy Queen of the old opera. He benevolently assists the loves of Stillman [a well-known New Orleans manufacturer of sarsaparilla] and Elssler, magnetizing them both, and bringing them together in that yet unappropriated territory known as Fairy Land. A famous wag of New Orleans fills the position of Dandini, knowing what Stillman is about, and following him in a similar state of magnetic *clairvoyance*. Here also appears at the Baron's castle (who?) why, no less distinguished personages than Miss Martineau and Lady Blessington!

"Both dead in love, and dying for the Doctor!" and both having come 'full split' from London, beautifully asleep, to set their caps and catch Prince Sarsaparilla in Fairy Land! The oddity of such a mixed assemblage, in local costume, usurping the fairy scene of Cinderella, is truly laughable, and the effect irresistably comic. *Col. Umbrella,* we have before heard of thro' the columns of the Picayune. He is a highly distinguished individual of the Second Municipality, New Orleans. He is a gentleman of great wealth and honor; is a professor of *cane-and-umbrellaology*. His profession is the first, and he is the first of his profession. This is the personage selected by the author to travel, in magnetic slumber, to Fairy Land, and take temporary possession of old Baron Pompolini's castle.

Poor Schinder Eller is successfully magnetized in the last scene, and dances the celebrated Elssler *cracovienne* beautifully asleep. . . .

So much for the *Republican's* dramatic critic (October 14). He ends by saying that he had planned to comment on the scenery and decorations, but he lacked the space. Fortunately, however, Smith fills in this gap in a letter to Woolf published in his memoirs.

. . . . It was highly successful here for four nights, and we expect great things of it in New Orleans, where the scene is laid, especially if Elssler goes to the St. Charles again. *She* is the *Cinderella,* and Dr. Stillman, the sarsaparilla man, the *Prince*. It is very funny. It plays an hour and a quarter—in one act. . . . Only think of Dr. Mesmer (in place of the *Fairy Queen*) being projected out of an alligator's mouth, head foremost, and alighting on his feet in an attitude! *Schinderella* comes up standing in a tub of sarsaparilla! Frogs (very large ones, with glistening eyes, made of any quantity of foil leaf) are seen swimming in the swamp; steam-boats passing and repassing in the lake beyond; railroad cars running down and from the lake, etc., etc. In the last scene a magical change takes place. The doctor's laboratory is transformed into the ballroom of the St. Louis Exchange Hotel, and, after the Cracovienne by *Eller,* a *pas de quatre* takes place between two bottles of sarsaparilla sirup

and two boxes of sarsaparilla pills! I take some credit to myself for the "effects," which are mostly of my own contriving. . . .[16]

Taken for all in all, *Schinderella,* must have been quite a show.

As for the actors who took part, I think they too deserve recognition. So I append the cast as it is given in the *Republican* of October 12.

Dr. Stillman, Prince of Sarsaparilla	De Bar
Col. Umbrella	Farren
Ricardo	Sol Smith
Doctor	Germon
Philosopher	Sankey
Umbrella Rangers—singing	Gentlemen of the Company
Schinder Eller, a magnetized danseuse	Mrs. Farren
Lady Blessington	Mrs. Wright
Miss Martineau	Mrs. Russell
Magnetized Girls	Ladies of the Company

As Smith says, the burlesque was given four times. The third was designated as "Author's Night," in other words, Mat's benefit. As a curtain-raiser, there was *The Heir at Law* with Field himself as Dick Dowlas, Ludlow as Dr. Pangloss, Farren as Lord Duberly, and Mrs. Farren as Cicely Homespun. Between the two pieces, Mat the Actor recited a lengthy "Rhyme about the Stage" (of course in heroic couplets) by Mat the Poet. (Three years later, when Mat was dying, his brother frantically besought Ludlow to try hypnotism in the hope that somehow it might effect the cure medicine had failed to bring about.)

The fourth performance followed by three nights the conclusion of Marble's second engagement. During the interim between this and the arrival of the next star, the Theatre occupied itself chiefly with selections from the standard repertoire, plays in which the actors were supposed to be "up" and which required a minimum of rehearsal—and that was a minimum indeed. But it did present another bit of "home-work," a "new local farce written by a Gentleman of this city, entitled PETER PUNCTILIO, or THE GENTLEMAN IN BLACK, being an *imp*-erfect sketch of an *imp*-ortant

[16]Smith *Theatrical Management,* 160.

character, whose *imp*-lied reality may *imp*-art to an *imp*-ortunate public, some more correct *imp*-ressions of an *imp*-pudent [*sic*] and hitherto *imp*-enetrable and *imp*-erative personage. . . . The scene of this piece is laid at the Planter's House, and at a country residence, near the city of St. Louis." There is no clue to the authorship nor to the identity of the butt of his ridicule, if ridicule it was. Why were the amateur authors so zealous in putting bushels over their lights? The first explanation to occur to the mind is that they feared the condemnation of the narrow-minded who still regarded the theatre with horror. But, after all, the leading citizens had no hesitation in openly supporting Ludlow and Smith, and other play-actors as well. It is true that even the Reverend William Greenleaf Eliot, the liberal pastor of the Unitarian Church and, later, one of the founders of Washington University, whose character and works won the enthusiastic acclaim of the critical Dickens, fulminated against the theatre as a place of evil resort for the young, but his admonitions seem to have had little effect. As a matter of fact, Smith himself and his family later joined the Unitarian Church, and it was Dr. Eliot who buried them. So fear of puritanical condemnation cannot have staid them. Perhaps, it was just convention.

Whoever the author, the play was given twice with Ludlow in the title role and Mrs. Farren as Sally Tucker. Once it was sandwiched in between *Cherry and Fair Star* and *The Last Days of Pompeii*, and once, for Ludlow's benefit, after *Speed the Plough*.

About the engagement of the next and last star of 1841 there seem to have been difficulties. In the Ludlow and Smith Letter-book, under the date of September 28, there is a copy of a communication addressed to J. H. Hackett in reply to one received from him ten days before.

With all the desire we have to shake you by the hands—we cannot recede from the terms we proposed in the first instance to you.

We have therein suggested to you such as we only name to the *best* talent in the country—and such as the best talent has been fairly compensated on—

We have played *twenty-nine nights* since we opened for our fall season—and we assure you (*confidentially*) that our receipts have averaged a trifle over *One hundred and Eighty* a night and without any very extraordinary attraction.

We mention this to show you, that we deem the position we have taken, a liberal one—and at the same time permit us to say that we think you have lost sight of your interest in declining to pay us a visit—We shall now proceed to fill up the nights offered you, in another way.

Should you feel disposed to look in upon us at New Orleans—shall be happy to hear from you. We close about the first November.

James Henry Hackett was at this time one of the bright luminaries of the American stage. The scion of prominent New York families, he had abandoned the mercantile business for the stage when injudicious investments had swept away his savings about twenty years before. At first unsuccessful, he had, however, before long won popular favor with his Yankee and Kentucky characterizations, and later with his Falstaff, which before long became the accepted version. As Walter Prichard Eaton states in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, "it was undoubtedly the best Falstaff of its time both in America and England." According to William Winter it "was a symmetrical and extraordinary blending of intellect and sensuality. . . . He interpreted a mind that was merry, but one in which merriment was strongly tinctured with scorn. It cared nothing about virtue, except that some persons trade on that attribute; and it knew nothing about sweetness, except that it is a property of sugar and a good thing in sack."[17] But Dr. Eaton continues, "Much more than his Falstaff, however, the racey native character types he depicted, evidently with careful realism of external detail and copious broad humor, were what made him an important figure in the early theatre."

He was certainly important enough for the managers to want him if they could have him without loss. What is more, he wanted them. At least, he wanted St. Louis, and St. Louis he resolved to reach by one means or another. If Ludlow and Smith would not pay the piper, he would fend for himself and see what happened. Or, perhaps, he decided to see what a little judicious bluffing would accomplish. At all events, on October 19 he inserted in the *Republican*—and, I presume, the other local papers—an advertisement which in length rivals the Davenport blasts of the spring season. Having identified himself, although he begins by saying that he is "perhaps

[17] *The Wallet of Time*, I, 98.

not entirely unknown by reputation," he announces that he is "desirous of availing himself of the only opportunity he may ever have of visiting St. Louis" and that he "proposed in the apprehended event of the previous engagements of the Theatre precluding his appearance upon their stage, during the week commencing Monday, 25th October, current, to deliver A SERIES of DRAMATIC READINGS, both Serious and Comic, and principally from SHAKESPEARE, and intended to illustrate ELOCUTIONARY EXPRESSION." There follows a lengthy and detailed program which there is no space to copy here.

Whether or not his maneuver was all bluff and he eventually capitulated to the demands of the managers or they surrendered to his, there is nothing to show. Whatever the course of their negotiations, it was in the Theatre that he opened on October 25, playing Falstaff in *Henry IV*. Ludlow, yielding to his penchant for youthful roles for which he can hardly have been suited, was the Hotspur—I cannot think a very good one. Maynard was more properly cast as the Prince, with Sankey as Worcester, Mrs. Farren as Lady Percy, and Mrs. Russell as Dame Quickly, the last named probably a little over-refined. Smith did not take part in the Shakespeare performance, but did bring down the curtain as Swig in *The Swiss Swains*. The management, daring neither to brave the wrath of the public by raising the prices nor to risk ruin by leaving them alone, hit upon a compromise which seems to have satisfied all concerned. They raised the dress circle to a dollar, but left the second tier boxes and the pit at fifty cents, and the gallery at a quarter—"Private Boxes 50 cents extra" This device evidently worked, for the *Republican* reported the next morning that the "dress circle was handsomely filled, and the pit and third tier were crowded with the same persons who heretofore preferred those seats." The editor added: "By the way, if the managers will lower the stand of the Orchestra one foot or so, it will prevent much of the standing and confusion in the pit. As it is, the Orchestra and their music stands, are directly in the way of persons in the rear of it." As for Hackett's Falstaff, it met with the editor's hearty approval.

On Tuesday the star was seen in two more of his most famous roles, Colonel Nimrod Wildfire in *The Kentuckian*, and Monsieur

Mallet in Moncrieff's farce of that name. With the latter, the editor was especially delighted. "We have no hesitation in pronouncing this piece of acting one of the cleverest and most perfect dramatic impersonations, that may be witnessed at the present day. The audience, and particularly the French portion of it, on Tuesday evening, were electrified with something entirely beyond their expectations. Tears and laughter were provoked by turns, and admiration grew each moment stronger until at one of the touching points of the inimitable histrion, it burst forth in one spontaneous expression of prolonged applause." This on October 28. Yet on November 1, the editor—or the firm's press agent speaking through him—expressed pained surprise that, when this playlet was given for the second time, so few of the French citizens turned out to see it.

Because of his success as Monsieur Mallet, Hackett also performed Monsieur Morbleu in *Monsieur Tonson* or *The Bewildered Frenchman,* by the same author, Mrs. Farren supporting him as Madame Bellegarde. But first he demonstrated his mastery of Irish brogue as O'Callaghan in *His Last Legs.* The repetition of Moncrieff's first-named little play was accompanied by *Solomon Swop* with Hackett in the title role.

Some eighteen months before, St. Louis theatre-goers had seen Joseph Jefferson II as Rip Van Winkle, a part later to be immortalized by his son and namesake. Now, on October 30, they had an opportunity to see what Hackett could do with the same character, of which he was one of the first exponents. When discussing the Jefferson production, I pointed out that the version then used was almost certainly the work of John Kerr, an English actor. "J. H. Hackett," says Dr. Arthur Hobson Quinn, "played Rip in a modification of this version at the Park Theatre in New York on April 22, 1830. While he was in England he became acquainted with the revision, probably of Kerr's play, which W. Bayle Bernard had already made for [Frederick Henry] Yates, and on September 4, 1833, he played at the Park Theatre in Kerr's version altered by Bernard."[18] Presumably that is the one he used in St. Louis in 1841. Yet the sub-title of the Kerr dramatization was *The Demon of the Catskill Mountains;* that of the one played by Hackett on this occasion was

[18]Quinn: *American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War,* 328.

A Legend of the Katskill Mountains, which was similar to, but not identical with, *A Legend of the Catskills* later used by Charles Burke.[19]

Ludlow's opinion of Hackett's interpretation throws some light on its nature. "After the death of Mr. Charles Burke, Mr. Joseph Jefferson came out with his representation of 'old *Rip,*' and this was formed on a mould of his own, containing the best points of Mr. Hackett and Mr. Burke,—not so unsophisticated and good-humored as Hackett's, nor yet so low and sharp-witted as Burke's. . . ."[20] Smith asserts "I should despair of finding a man or woman in an audience of five hundred who could hear Hackett's utterance of five words in the second act, 'But she was mine vrow,' without experiencing some moisture in the eyes."[21]

On the same bill with *Rip* was "the ludicrous scene of the *Militia Training*" with the star as Major Joe Bunker.

For his benefit on the following Monday, Hackett selected *The Merry Wives of Windsor,* which then had its first performance in St. Louis. Ludlow, instead of playing Ford as one would have expected, elected to be the Slender of the evening, leaving the other role to Maynard. Farren was cast as Dr. Caius and Saunders as Hugh Evans; how well they handled their respective dialects, we are left to surmise. Meg Page naturally fell to Mary Ann Farren, and Mrs. Page to Mrs. Warren. I take it for granted that Mrs. Quickly fell to the lot of Mrs. Russell, but her name does not appear in the advertisement. With this Shakespearean novelty was linked *Monsieur Mallet,* and in the character of the old Frenchman Hackett said good-bye.

The next evening was officially the last of the season. It was turned over to Miss Johnson for her benefit, and she took advantage of the occasion to show herself in "her classical representation of the

[19]Both Dr. Quinn and William Winter (*The Jeffersons,* p. 187, n.) mention Ludlow's claim that he had produced *Rip Van Winkle* with Charles Parsons in the title role in Cincinnati six months before its premiere at the Park on April 22, 1830 I have not been able to check Ludlow's claim against records in Cincinnati, but I should hesitate to to accept it without verification because of his inveterate inaccuracy in the matter of dates, and his determination to show that he had done everything first, even when an examination of the facts would show his claim to be without basis.

[20]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 392.

[21]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 213.

MARBLE STATUES." But that was not her only contribution. She also danced Taglioni's Waltz and enacted the wicked reprobate himself in the pantomime of *Don Juan* with Smith as Scaramouche (for the first time in several years, as he noted in his diary) and Mrs. Warren as Donna Anna. The curtain-raiser was the farce—not Banim's drama—of *Damon and Pythias,* enlisting the services of Maynard, Sankey, Saunders, Mrs. Farren, and Mrs. Germon. Mr. Germon, as his mite, contributed a song, "The Feast of Roses." And so the fall season of 1841 came to an official close.

The curtain rose, however, once more. On Wednesday Mrs. Farren was given a complimentary benefit by a number of the leading citizens. Behind this friendly move lay the belief that she was bidding St. Louis farewell, and they wished to demonstrate their regard for her as an actress and as a woman. Smith did not think highly of such benefits, which were, he thought, too often little more than fakes and frequently resulted in actual losses to those who were supposed to profit by them.[22] This one, however, seems to have been the real article, and he noted in his diary that the receipts were over $400. The two plays on the bill were *The Belle's Stratagem* in which Mrs. Farren of course played Letitia Hardy with Ludlow as Doricourt (another juvenile), Farren as Hardy, Maynard as Sir George, and Sankey as Saville; and *The Swiss Swains* in which she was the Rosette with Smith as Swig.

The farewell proved, however, a trifle premature, because she and her husband did not sever their connections with Ludlow and Smith until four years later, and she was to return to St. Louis more than once in her present capacity before she undertook the thrills and risks of stardom. At the same time, there was probably good reason to believe the end was near. With her neither partner could have any quarrel, and in their memoirs utter no word in her disparagement. But with George Percy it was a different matter. Fond as both men were of him personally, both as actor and stage-manager, he was a thorn in the flesh, and in his case at least a break was certainly contemplated.

But one member of the company did take a permanent leave. The name of Mrs. De Bar is missing from the published casts after the

[22] *Ibid.,* 250.

final performance of *Cherry and Fair Star* on October 4. Her husband's is missing after the twenty-third. In Smith's diary under the date of November 1 is the following entry: "This evening heard of the death of Mrs. De Bar, one of our Dramatic Company. She died on her way to N. Orleans, & was buried at Cape Girardeau, 140 miles below St. Louis—Disease, *consumption*. . . . Poor De Bar! He will feel her loss most sensibly!"

How did she keep going so long?

Here end the theatrical annals of St. Louis for 1841; for this year, at least so far as the records show, there was no one to keep the fires burning in the Museum. One item in the *Republican* of November 12 does, however, deserve notice. It advertises the fact that, because of the inclement weather, one Mr. Valentine is postponing his concert till the fifteenth. "In addition to assistance already named, he has the pleasure of announcing Mr. Bateman, formerly of the St. Louis Theatre, who has also kindly volunteered for the occasion." So the future discoverer of Sir Henry Irving was still in town.

In closing the chapter it is, perhaps, not unfitting to quote a few lines from Mrs. Farren's defence of her profession spoken from the stage during her benefit.

> Say, did the Mighty Mother nurse her child
> In arts deserving but to be reviled?
> Believe it or not: it is a glorious art,
> Worthy of favor from each generous heart.
>
> Though to the Drama there perhaps may cling
> Some evil, as to every earthly thing,
> Yet if the good the evil far outweighs,
> Why should it meet reproach, instead of praise?

VII

"HARD TIMES, COME AGAIN NO MORE!"

1842

The story of 1842 is not a long one. It is not that nothing happened, for the usual spring and fall seasons were carried on in the Theatre at Third and Olive, but the events were neither exciting nor especially heartening, and they have left but a meagre record behind them. They are glumly disposed of in much the same cursory manner by both the managers,[1] and, for some mysterious reason, the usually reliable *Republican* chose to pass over affairs theatrical in silence. Perhaps the business office could not come to terms with the managers of the Theatre in the matter of publicity, for the usual advertisements are strangely missing from the pages of the morning paper, and there are few references among the news items. Fortunately, however, Ludlow and Smith did strike a bargain with the staff of the *People's Organ,* a journal which was distinctly, as its name implies, an organ of "the peepul." There we find almost daily publicity and, in addition, a considerable number of reviews.

The St. Louisans of 1842 were not, however, entirely dependent on Messrs. Ludlow and Smith for their evenings' diversions. A few samplings from the winter and spring issues of the *Republican* make that fact abundantly clear. No one had of necessity to spend all his leisure moments by the family hearth. For those on culture bent there were the Lyceum lectures given in the new Lyceum Hall just one block south of the Theatre. The hour was seven-thirty, and the admission for gentlemen 12½ cents; the management was too gallant to think of making any charge for the ladies, who were not permitted to come unescorted anyway. A season ticket might be had for a dollar. On January 14, Mr. Charles C. Carroll discoursed on "Poverty—its uses and claims." A week later, the Reverend I. T. Hinton discussed and compared the English, French, and American Revolutions; the next week, Mr. J. McKean Duncan was heard on 'Money, or a Peep at Society," and on February 25 Mr. J. B.

[1]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 551; Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 167.

Crockett took as his subject the improving theme of "The acquisition of wealth, its influence upon characters and its proper employment." There were other series too, for instance one on the virtues of temperance, and another by the celebrated Dr. Joseph McDowell, who undertook to justify the institution of slavery, stressing the differences between the white and black races, and to demonstrate that abolitionism, born in England, was the fruit, not of philanthropy, but of cupidity.[2] Scientific subjects too such as astronomy also came in for their share of attention, and there were, of course, the inevitable discussions, pro and con, of hypnotism. In fact, if the citizens did not improve their minds, they had no one to blame but themselves.

Nor were the fine arts overlooked. February, according to the *Republican,* saw at Concert Hall a display of "GRECIAN AND ROMAN STATUES . . . WITH APPROPRIATE MUSIC." These were obviously tableaux representing famous groups of statuary and also paintings, those announced for the 24th being "DAVID praising GOD, from Reuben's great picture which has called forth plaudits as well as that of Paul preaching at Athens, from a painting of the celebrated American Artist, BENJAMIN WEST, Esq. . . ." The entrance fee was 50 cents. "Children and Schools [whatever that meant] 25 cents." Evidently tableaux came higher than mere lectures. There was, moreover, no dearth of concerts of one sort or another, too many to be noted here, though mention might be made of the Masters Hughes, boy harpists, of Signor Nagle and Madame Sutton, and of the Hungarian Singers, all of whom offered themselves and their wares in May and June.

To these assorted diversions, whether aesthetic or intellectual, there was presumably no objection so long as they were limited to weekdays, but woe betide anyone who had the hardihood to amuse himself on Sunday! The *Republican* of February 15 printed a solemn "CAUTION TO SABBATH BREAKERS."

We understand that a young gentleman of this city, who had been on a riding expedition on Sunday afternoon, was thrown from his buggy and one of his thighs so badly broken that amputation will be necessary. What an awful warning to those who will *indulge* in scenes of pleasure on that holy day!

[2] *Missouri Republican,* January 29, 1842.

It is difficult not to believe that the editor had his tongue in his cheek when he wrote this admonition, and yet the 1840's saw some of the old Calvinistic prejudices in surprising places. One of these was the diary of none other than Mat Field, who on April 24, 1839, bitterly reproached himself in his entry for that day for having done this very thing—gone for a ride on Sunday.[8] Mat was at this time seriously considering a change from the stage to the ministry. Instead, he turned to journalism.

The real sensation of the spring months was the brief visit of Charles Dickens and his later discarded wife, who stayed at the elegant new Planters House and were entertained royally. The *Republican* (April 11) announced that they were to be tended a *soirée*. "This mode has been adopted in preference to a ball as it furnishes to all an opportunity of gratifying the feelings [i.e., the curiosity] which call them together, and will not interfere with the scruples of propriety of any." Inasmuch as the Theatre was not yet open, the festivities did not include dramatizations of any of the guest of honor's novels, and so again the "unco guid" were spared.

One of the few contributions to our enlightenment on the subject in which we are really interested vouchsafed us by the *Republican* was printed in the issue of May 31. Under the familiar heading of THEATRE (usually the sign-manual of a blurb) it was announced that the spring season would begin "on or about SATURDAY NEXT, June 4th, with a good and efficient company of actors and musicians. The Parquette seats will be restored and other arrangements made for the comfort and convenience of the auditors." That "puffs" of this type were sometimes of managerial origin is attested by the entry in Ludlow's diary on July 25, 1843: ". . . wrote an editorial notice of the Opera for the Organ."

As it turned out, the season did not open until Monday, June 6. This fact is substantiated by a brief notice in the *Republican* of that day, which effectively disproves Ludlow's assertion that the time was "early in May." Except for this one error, the brief narrative of the senior partner is in the main correct. As for Smith's account, it is nothing if not succinct.

The St. Louis season of 1842 was a miserable one. The first night's receipts barely reached $200, and those of the closing night

[8] *Missouri Historical Society, Bulletin*, V (1949), 163.

[apparently in the fall] to only $75.75. Mrs. Sefton (now Mrs. Wallack) and E. S. Conner played a tolerable engagement, and Mr. J. H. Kirby a very poor one. Martin Van Buren, on his visit to the house, though well advertised, only drew $477.50.

Ludlow's version amounts to little more than a paraphrase of his partner's. He too mentions Mrs. Sefton and Conner, who, he says, "played a two weeks' engagement with us . . . but it did not yield them or the management enough to pay them for their trouble." He adds that a "few other 'stars' straggled along, played, and departed pretty much in the same plight as the above-named persons." His assertion that the spring season ended during "the latter part of June" is disproved by a notice in the *Republican* of July 27 which calls for support for Smith's benefit scheduled for that evening as well as by many advertisements in the *People's Organ*. He is also weeks off in giving the date of the opening of the fall season as "about the 1st of September."

The chief preoccupation of both partners seems to have been with the worthless currency which was then flooding the country and incidentally their own managerial till. To this infliction both devote considerable space. Ludlow groans that they opened "with a good comedy and farce to two hundred dollars, paper currency, worth on an average about fifty cents on the dollar, specie standard. The principal circulation was city corporation money, with a small amount of a few banks in the Western States, but a trifle better than the above. Thus did we begin a season in a fine theatre, and a good company of actors, with the prices of admission fifty, thirty, and twenty-five cents, and obliged to take a currency that actually reduced the rates to twenty-five, fifteen, and twelve and a half cents, specie standard." These figures do not tally with those Smith entered in his diary on June 6: "The St. Louis Theatre opened for the season. Prices of admission reduced to the following rates: Dress Circle 75 c—Pit & 2d Tier 50c. Gallery 25 cents."

The *Republican* of that same date expresses the hope that "the play-going community are prepared to welcome back their favorites. Several of whom, it will be seen by the advertisement, make their appearance this evening." The hopeful editor probably assumed that, as heretofore, advertising copy, with perhaps accompanying puffs, would soon be in his hands, but, if he did, he was soon disillusioned.

"As the times are rather bluish, the best remedy we know of is to go and laugh the 'devils' off at the Theatre." The times were "bluish" all right, but so also were the managers, and it would seem that they concluded that they had no cash to spare for publicity in the *Republican* at the rates stipulated when playbills (which could also serve as programs), and the *People's Organ* would turn the trick.

From the publicity in the *Organ* we are enabled to piece together, if not the entire personnel, at least the names of the chief performers of the spring season. For one thing, both managers were not only in town but active on the stage, Smith unusually so. The advertisements include also such other familiar names as those of the Farrens, Mrs. Russell, and Maynard. James Thorne was back, not as a star, but as a regular, and the wandering Newton had returned to the fold. There was also young Richard Russell. For the first time we encounter Bingham, Mack, Mathews, Reid, Eddy, Cook, and Miss Mathews. The Cook was probably A. B., who was soon to assume the post of clerk and treasurer of the firm. Of Bingham, Mack, Reid, and the two Mathews' I can tell nothing save that the names of Bingham, Mack, and Miss Ellen Mathews appear on the roster of the new St. Charles company in January, 1843.[4]

Finally we come to Eliza Petrie and Edward Eddy. The former was a young lady who had enjoyed great popularity in ingenue roles while with Ludlow and Smith in Mobile, and during their first seasons in their new house in St. Louis. Ludlow says she "was considered a very fair singer in her day, and although her voice was not powerful, it was very sweet, and of considerable compass. She had very little power as an actress, yet she played a great variety of business very passably."[5] In those early years she had usually been cast opposite young Mat Field, and so convincing had been their performances that the sentimental public had assumed that their love-making was not wholly artificial, and poor Mat was, to his intense embarrassment, frequently rallied on the subject. The truth of the matter was, as his diary reveals, that, although he was uneasily aware of a certain physical attraction, he actually disliked his supposed inamorata, especially her voice and her rather effusive manners. But

[4]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 561.
[5]*Ibid.*, 559.

those days had passed. Mat had married and left the stage, and Eliza had been playing in the East, chiefly in New York and Philadelphia under the aegis of William E. Burton.[6] As for Eddy, he was born to fame of a sort. Dr. Odell describes him as "long a popular hero of tragedy, romance, and melodrama." But now he had his foot no higher than the lowest rung of the ladder which was to lead him to fame and fortune as actor and manager.

As I hinted in beginning this chapter, 1842 was, so far as the St. Louis stage was concerned, a year of little yield. For the most part the repertoire during the spring season offered little that calls for more than passing mention. The plays were, with perhaps one rather notable exception, of the stock variety and the performances, I suspect, though by no means bad, rather humdrum. The managers did what they could to attract audiences, but people were not in a play-going mood.

We learn from the *Organ* that the season was opened on June 6 with *The Heir at Law* and *The Young Widow,* both partners contributing to the entertainments of the evening, Ludlow as Dr. Pangloss in the comedy, and Smith as Splash in the farce. In the former Thorne was seen as Zekiel Homespun, Farren as Lord Duberly, Maynard as Dick Dowlas, and Mrs. Farren as Cicely. The paper had a representative on hand, and two days later he delivered his verdict.

THEATRE. We were present at the opening of the Theatre, and received a Panacea for the blue devils from Dr. Pangloss. Mrs. Farren, who is decidedly a favorite with the St. Louis audience, received a hearty welcome on her appearance—and she still maintains her position as a chaste and correct actress. Both pieces went off well. "Old Sale," as the Creoles call him, was there, but since he has been among the Spaniards his soubriqua [*sic*] has been altered to "Don Sobero."[7] We were disappointed at not seeing his mustaches on, for we were told they hung below his breast, and were braided

[6]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 469 and 520; A. H. Wilson: *A History of the Philadelphia,* 105.

[7]Earlier in the year Smith had led a luckless equestrian expedition to Havana. On his return he wrote his friend Woolf: ". . . I had inadvertently permitted my *mustaches* to grow to such an enormous length while on the island of Cuba, that, when returned to the States, I found I could speak and write *nothing but Spanish* . . . They *came off* yesterday evening about gunfire" (Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 165).

like a horse's tail in rainy weather. We think he has cut them off for fear Miss Petrie would pull them. By the bye this charming actress appeared last night, after an absence of three years. She has lost nothing of her sprightliness. Jemmy Thorne looks as natural as ever; and upon the whole, the company were welcomed back with applause, on the appearance of each well known face.

The next evening "Don Sobero" was in the cast of the main piece, playing the pleasant part of Captain Copp in *Charles II* while the fair Eliza, as Mary, plied him with songs. She sang more songs in *The Loan of a Lover,* Thorne being this time the lucky man. And so the season got under way, albeit somewhat modestly. This modesty, by the way, met with the hearty approval of the editor of the *Organ*. On the day of the opening he observed, not without some relish: "The price of admission has been materially reduced—to nearly one-half the former prices. This is right; although it will compel these gentlemen to break up their old, and we might say, ruinous custom of engaging in the 'starring' business to that extent which they formerly indulged in. . . ."

I referred a few lines back to one exception to the uninspiring evenings on Third and Olive. Perhaps I should add a second—of a minor sort. This was the visit of Ex-President Van Buren to the Theatre on the evening of June 22. Smith felt a bit ill-used because the magnifico had attracted only $477.50 to the house. The *Organ* and one of its correspondents, not having any financial stake in the business, saw the evening with less jaundiced eyes. I shall skip the editorial comment of June 23, but quote from the longer one of the following day.

THEATRE. We had barely time to say yesterday that the presence of Mr. Van Buren at the Theatre on Wednesday evening was quite favorable to Old Sol's pocket. We can safely say that it was not merely "a trump card," but decidedly *"a lone hand."* The old building was crowded from pit to gallery, and numerous bevies of fair ladies graced the boxes, and gave zest to the entertainment by their presence and their smiles. The middle box was appropriately ornamented with flags bearing the stripes and stars of the Union, and when Mr. Van Buren was seen to enter it, followed by his friends, all eyes were turned to the spot, and every hand greeted him with rounds of applause that made the old theatre ring again.

The acting in the good old comedy of "The School for Scandal" was generally excellent; though it struck us that, Mr. Maynard

would have made a much better Charles and Mr. Ludlow a much better Joseph Surface. We heard others suggest the same thing. The Ex-President seemed to enjoy the entertainment, and appeared to watch the play attentively and with interest. At the end of the first play he quietly slipped out.

The exception to which I referred was Dion Boucicault's *London Assurance,* which was given its premiere on June 29 and achieved before July 13 no fewer than nine performances. Furthermore, when putting it on the stage, the managers took the unaccustomed liberty of dispensing with the usual afterpiece. I give the cast entire.

Sir Harcourt Courtly	Farren
Max Harkaway	Mathews
Dazzle	Ludlow
Charles Courtly	Maynard
Mr. Spanker	Cook
Mark Meddle	Thorne
Cool	Eddy
James	Mack
Lady Gay Spanker	Mrs. Farren
Grace Harkaway	Miss Petrie
Pert	Mrs. Warren

This production was greeted with rapturous enthusiasm by the *Organ,* which "went all out" in praising the comedy and found the performance almost everything it should have been. In fact, it devoted a whole column to the subject. ". . . The present company have performed the same characters in New Orleans that they do here, and are therefore at home in their parts. Mrs. Farren's personification of Lady Gay is unexceptionable, and it is worth one dollar at least to listen to her enthusiastic relation of the particulars of a steeple chase. It is perfect. . . Mr. Farren's representation of Sir Harcourt is good, but has not quite enough of the 'dem foine'—a la Mantilini, according to our conceptions of the character. We think he could give 'the exquisite' a *'little finer* touch' in the way of mouthing his words." But best of all the critic liked Thorne. All in all, he went home a happy man, and he urged his fellow-citizens to share his delight. Apparently they took him at his word, for on July 6, the day of the fourth repetition, he exclaimed, " . . . the demand for seats does not abate. The 'legitimate' takes admirably—

no large posters—no stars—no puffing—no humbug!" What is more, afterpieces seemed to have been found to be superfluous. No one apparently missed them. Nevertheless, as soon as the sensational new piece began to falter, and other comedies were given, the afterpieces returned to their accustomed places on the bills. But on July 18 the *Organ* resumed its campaign for their abolition. "We heard no complaint of the omission of farces during the run of London Assurance. The fact is, people do not wish to be kept from their beds beyond the 'noon of night.' "

In spite of all this concentrated enthusiasm, there was at least one dissenting voice. In the *Republican of* July 1 we do detect a faint murmur.

THE THEATRE.—A criticism on the stage is well enough when honestly made, but to say, as the Mound City does, that "Max Harkaway," in London Assurance, was well personified, or well performed on Wednesday evening, is not justice. We thought the actor a poor representation of a "good old English Gentleman," and ignorant of his part.

That success does not come cheap is hinted by the following letter now reposing in the archives of the Missouri Historical Society.

New York, Oct. 29' 1841

Messrs. Smith & Ludlow
Gentlemen

I know of a marked copy of "London Assurance" which has been doing wonders for us. Knowing that it will be an impossibility to procure a copy on acct. of the anxiety of the parties in possession to keep it I have thought that perhaps you would be glad to obtain this. You *can* have it & I will forward it immediately on the receipt of a letter from you—for fifty dollars!

Pray oblige me by return Post & believe me

Your obt. svt.
Charlotte Cushman

Miss Cushman, America's greatest tragic actress, was, oddly enough, the Lady Gay of the original New World cast at the Park in New York on October 11, 1841, and, what is more, scored in it one of her outstanding successes. According to Dr. Odell, Henry Placide had brought the script of the play with him from London

and turned it over to Simpson for use in New York. It was probably, therefore, to him that Ludlow and Smith's 50 dollars went. To the production at the Park Dr. Odell applies the adjective *epochal*. He calls Boucicault's work "the best new comedy for many decades," and says that the elaborate realism of the scenery had a revolutionary effect. "Staging was probably never again so shabby or so stereotyped in London or New York, after London Assurance pointed the way to stage rooms which actually copied details of contemporary housefurnishings. . . . A room with three walls became, from that date, a necessity in fashionable playhouses; furthermore, this room must be luxuriously furnished in the latest mode."[8]

It would be gratifying to be able to assume that the St. Louis production lived up to specifications, but I fear that would be a rash conclusion. As we know, Ludlow and Smith were not at this time burdened with excess cash, and I think it very unlikely that they were in a position to indulge in lavish stage-sets, however much they may have wished to do so. But they did bring in reinforcements—or, at least, a reinforcement. They engaged Gentleman George Barrett to take over Sir Harcourt on the last two evenings of the run (on July 11 and 13) and release Farren for Max Harkaway. How much money they spent on this novelty, there is no way of telling to-day, nor how many cents on the dollar they got back. They did not achieve the Park's three consecutive weeks; yet in St. Louis in the early '40's nine performances, if they did not break a record, at least approached it.

Barrett lingered on till July 25, bolstering up the casts of such "good old comedies" as *The Rivals*, *The Englishman in India*, *Wives as They Were*, *John Bull*, *The School for Scandal*, *Three Weeks after Marriage*, and *The Road to Ruin*. It is, I think, safe to assume that everything he touched was well done, for there seems to be no room for doubt that the man was a gifted artist.

One interesting feature of the season was the unusual activity of Smith. Again and again his name appears in the casts listed in the *Organ*. I have already mentioned Splash and Captain Copp. There followed Crop in *No Song, No Supper*, Maximilian Schlopper in *The Sentinel*, Peter in *The Stranger*, Malkins in *Of Age To-*

[8]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 534.

morrow, Martin in *The Maid and the Magpie*, Dominie Sampson in *Guy Mannering*, François in *The Ladder of Love*, Sancho in *Like Master, Like Man*, Thomson in *The Secret*, Mawworm in *The Hypocrite* (his great part), Darby in *The Poor Soldier*, and Puff in *The Critic*. "During *London Assurance*," wrote the *Organ* on July 9, "Sol did not ever show his face before the curtain. 'Come out, old fellow, and let's see how you look, once more.'" He came. Before he appeared as his beloved Mawworm on July 16, the same paper announced: "OLD SOL is the Mawworm, and we expect his speech in the last scene will even excel that recently given by a celebrated M.D., at the political meeting on Wednesday evening." It would be interesting to know who the "celebrated M.D." was.

Ludlow too had been busy on the stage, but he was less of a novelty. Nor does he seem ever to have lighted fires under his audiences as his partner did. I suspect that on the stage as off he was more restrained. Sol, I also suspect, did not always consider himself bound by the admonitions directed by Shakespeare (through the mouth of Hamlet) at all "clowns" in general and, probably, at William Kemp in particular. Offstage he was an inveterate practical joker, and on stage he was prone to indulge in considerable exuberance. He no doubt kept his finger on the pulse of his audience, and gave it just what it wanted. Ludlow, more on his dignity and perhaps often closer to the intent of the author, stirred up less excitement. Nevertheless, I think that Sol, when he thought the occasion called for a display of real artistry, could meet the demands of the situation.

Perhaps the richest yield of the *Organ* is to be found in a very long editorial which appeared in the issue of June 17. It really tells a great deal, and for that reason I shall quote from it *in extenso*.

> We cannot withhold the expression of our entire approbation of the course pursued by the Managers of our Theatre, in excluding every thing like *puffing* from their bills and advertisements. In days gone by, they found it necessary to follow the lead of the Park, and other Eastern theatres—the public seemed to *require* something *extraordinary* to be announced—at least—to induce even a respectable attendance. *Some* person's name must be paraded at the head of the bill in large capitals, as a *star*; and if a real, out-and-out two hundred dollar a night individual did not happen along, some of the "stock" were forthwith promoted to the top of the bill; or,

worse than that—it was not unusual to see a thirty line pica employed, to make play-goers acquainted with the important fact, that some back-door keeper or stable boy would dance "Jim along Josey," accompanied by a modern *Paganini* on the banjo! It is to be hoped that all this is over—that humbug is banished from the boards of our Theatre forever.

The gentlemen having the direction of the Theatre have seized upon the occasion of reducing the prices of admission, (a very judicious move, by the by,) to introduce a new system with regard to announcements. We see no puffery in the bills—no "last night but seventeen," of this or that performer—no "only night" of such and such a play—no appearance of a favorite performer in a certain character "for that night only"—and finally, no *distinction* in the size of the type employed to print the names of the company, from first to last. This is right. The people who compose the audience in a Theatre, have no business to know—nor do they care to know—for how long a term each actor is engaged—whether he receives ten dollars per week, or is engaged "at enormous expense, for a few nights only!" or whether he will *ever* appear again in the same character. It is enough to be made acquainted with the fact that a certain play and afterpiece will be performed on a certain night, with a certain cast of characters, (and that cast satisfactory,) and to feel assured that all announcements will be strictly fulfilled, to secure the confidence of the play-going community, and such an attendance as the merits of the entertainments (the times considered) shall claim. . . . The public are coming to their senses in theatrical matters, as well as in money and *other* matters. Good plays, a good stock company, low prices of admission, and *a strict adherence to promises made in the bills*, are taking the place of melo-dramas, dumb show, blue lights, fiery dragons, negro dancing, six nights' engagements, and humbug!

I wonder just how thoroughly the managers relished this somewhat back-handed compliment. It reminds me of the hoary-headed old joke about the first mate on a sailing vessel who avenged himself on the captain for entering in the log "The first-mate drunk to-day" by making this entry the following day: "The captain sober to-day." The editor concluded his remarks with the hint that as long as the managers continued their present course, they might "calculate on the steady and honest support of the People's Organ."

Just how deep an impression did the warning make? On July 11 the *Organ* itself printed this notice: "Mr. G. H. Barrett is engaged for a limited period." But in the line-up the star's name is not

printed in large type. And on July 26, apropos of *Alive and Merry* and *The Forest of Rosenwald*, the editor wrote: "A new comedy entitled 'Alive and Merry,' with a blood-and-thunder melo-drama, to-night. All tastes must be consulted; and those who delight in daggers, blue-lights, robbery and bloody murder, will be gratified to their hearts' content on this occasion."

In their autobiographies both partners bemoan the dire financial conditions of the times and of themselves in particular, but I am inclined to think that these looked worse in retrospect than at the moment. On June 5 Mat Field, as usual in New Orleans, wrote his wife: " . . . . Your father has written me a doleful letter from St. Louis. He advised me to stop Smith and tell him not to bring the company up at all, but Smith was gone. I don't think they will open the theatre, as if they do, it will be 'open and shut' with them." But this was written the day before the actual start of the season, and, of course, Ludlow's "doleful letter" must have been dated some days before that. Later correspondence paints a more cheering picture. On July 12 Smith's friend Woolf wrote: "I am rejoiced to learn that you are 'getting along' so well in St. Louis, and sincerely hope that you have a prosperous summer season."[9] Even better evidence is provided by an epistle from the pen of Ludlow himself addressed to Mat and dated July 12—just before the end of the run of *London Assurance*—"Our houses continue still to *pay*—there being very little variation in the receipts of the five different weeks we have been open. But I am apprehensive that the six next following weeks will fall below our expenses—they surely will if the weather should be hot and oppressive—so far we have had cool—and generally speaking, pleasant weather—should it continue such through the summer, the result may prove more favorable to us, than my present anticipations picture to me. . ." This is mystifying. Never had Ludlow and Smith attempted to operate straight through the summer; they invariably had closed for a rest during August. It seems unlikely that under the circumstances a change of so radical a character was under contemplation. But, whatever Ludlow had in mind, his fears concerning St. Louis temperatures turned out not to be groundless. On July 25 Smith wrote in his diary, "Hot—very

[9]Edwin Woolf to Sol Smith, July 12, 1842.

hot weather! Thermometer 82 in the shade; Dullest of times here just now. Money extremely scarce." Nor should the political complications, seldom absent as they were, be overlooked. On July 21 the *Organ* commented, "We hear of only one political meeting tonight. We expect to see the dress circle and parquette well filled." So, whatever tentative schemes they may have had, the managers shut up shop after Sol's benefit on July 27.

If the situation in St. Louis was depressing, it was by no means unique. The whole country was in the doldrums because of the unsettled banking and financial conditions. Mat Field in the letter quoted above told his wife of the situation in New Orleans. "Things are growing worse here every day, and the distress is as universal as it is severe. What little good money there is in the city, is hidden away and locked up, while all are struggling to push off the shinplasters upon one another." On April 25 the gossipy Woolf reported to Smith on the state of affairs in Philadelphia. "Theatricals are in a wretched condition here now; but that is not to be wondered at, when the state of the times is considered, and the great competition going on. In Philadelphia three theatres are now in full force, besides nightly Concerts, Lectures, and Temperance meetings, in addition to which every body is becoming bankrupt."

In August, while the professionals rested, I presume in the shade, zealous amateurs braved the high temperatures. The annual examination at St. Louis University included two plays, *La Mort de Caesar* in French on a Tuesday, and *Filial Love* in English on Wednesday. Julius Caesar himself was enacted by Lucien Tischel, and Antony by Alexander Garesché; also in the cast were Alfred H. Kernim, Felix Vallé, Louis Bourgeois, and Charles Downer. With the exception of Garesché, these seem to have been out-of-town "boarders." *Filial Love* involved the services of Edward Winchester, Richard Barrett, Henry B. Kelly, John Hemkin, Edw. L. Jennings, Isaac J. Cooper, and Gustave and Louis Brazeau.[10] I think that after acting in heat that prostrated the professionals, these gentlemen deserve to have their names handed down to posterity.

For information concerning the fall season we are again indebted chiefly to the *People's Organ* without whose daily advertisements

[10] *Missouri Republican*, August 20, 1842.

and occasional articles our cupboard would be almost bare. From Ludlow it is possible to pick up a few facts, but not many. "We had," he says, "a few 'stars' during the fall season, who played to average receipts somewhat better than those of the spring, but after paying these transient luminaries, we generally came off *minus*."[11] From the *Organ* and one or two items in the *Republican* we can, I think, safely conclude that the yield of the fall was of decidedly better quality than had been that of the spring. The latter had little to distinguish it save the success of *London Assurance*, which, strangely enough, was not given even once during the fall months; but these months did have several features worthy of at least passing mention.

Events got under way on August 13 with a bill composed of the ever-popular *She Stoops to Conquer* and the farce of *My Neighbor's Wife*, nothing especially startling about that. Nor was there any striking novelty in the composition of the company, which was almost identical with that which had shut up shop in July. Both managers were again on deck, but only Ludlow throughout the season. He was unusually active even for him, and availed himself of his strategic position to take over the roles which he found particularly delectable, even though some of them were not exactly suitable to his years or appearance. But this was the accepted procedure of actor-managers and, despite subdued grumblings, was taken as a matter of course; so it would be unfair to single him out for blame. Nevertheless, he certainly did "have himself a wonderful time," and, in view of his continuing perplexities, I think we need not begrudge him his enjoyment, especially as we did not have to see his performances in such roles as Young Marlow, Young Wilding, Charles Surface, Gratiano, Petruchio, and Cassio, though we may in our time have seen just as youthful roles in the hands of men considerably past forty-seven. With Smith it was, according to his wont, touch and go. He paused briefly on one of his flights, took a few bows, and was off again. Maynard was still on hand, at least until October, but then he seems to have surrendered his place for the time being to a newcomer of greater promise and ability. Better luck attended Eddy, for he fared extremely well, being cast

[11]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 551.

in a great number of highly desirable parts. However, as we shall see presently, his good fortune would seem to have overshot his deserts, and he did not win golden opinions on all sides. In fact, if the critic is as just as he is persuasive, Mr. Eddy's shortcomings reflect not a little on the efficiency of the management. Farren was in his accustomed place, as were also his wife with her mother and brother, and Mr. and Miss Helen Matthews. This last-named young lady had me for a time in a quandary because there seemed to be two of her. Sometimes the advertisements listed "Miss Matthews"—by this time she had picked up a second *t*—and just as frequently "Miss Helen Matthews"— and it took me almost the whole season to decide that she was alone in her glory. Nor should I forget Mrs. Eddy and Mrs. Warren, who on occasion led her little girl on by the hand. Most of the small fry were back, and once in a while under the press of necessity would be promoted temporarily to higher walks than their usual ones.

After the opening, night after night, familiar plays followed each other across the boards, plays long since forgotten and now reposing under layers of dust on library shelves. If there was every now and then a modest novelty, it was modest indeed, and boasted little in the way of prestige. During these early weeks the curtain rose at eight, but as the shades of night descended sooner and sooner, the performances began earlier and earlier, by October 24 as early as seven. There is no way of computing with any certainty the hour at which the final thud of the curtain was heard.

On August 20 a correspondent who signed himself "THESPIS" addressed a letter to the editor of the *Organ* in which he ardently promoted a play by "a young gentleman of this city" which he had recently seen in manuscript form. "The piece is entitled 'MORMONISM,' and is, in some parts, couched in such phrase as gave me great amusement while reading it. It represents the schemes of the Mormons at Nauvoo, but is stripped of every thing which would be objectionable to female delicacy." The writer is convinced that, if given the chance, the managers would seize it with avidity and reap a fortune thereby. But, whatever the reason, they missed their chance, and *Mormonism* has joined the ranks of the unseen.

September 5 was marked by the return of Barrett, who, as we shall see, had other business in town, but was not averse to spending a few leisure evenings on the stage at Third and Olive. He began as Goldfinch in *The Road to Ruin*, and lingered on until the nineteenth, when he took a benefit as Durimel in *The Point of Honor*, Sir Charles in *Three Weeks after Marriage*, and Toby in *The Mummy*. On the preceding evening, the theoretical last of his engagement, he had taken part in another triple bill as Colonel Ferrier in *The Barrack Room*, Smith bowing himself on and off as Walter in *The Children in the Wood*—Sol, Junior, playing the Boy to the Girl of "Miss" Warren—and Ludlow contributing Teague, *Honest Thieves*. Departing from his usual type of character, he appeared on the twelfth as Belcour, the sentimental hero of *The West Indian*, a role which, however, had been in his repertoire for over twenty years.[12] This was only the third performance in St. Louis of Cumberland's romantic comedy, the only previous interpreter of the leading role having been J. S. Balls. It was during Barrett's engagement that Smith had made his seasonal re-entry on the fourteenth as Sim in *Wild Oats* (Barrett as Rover) and as Philip Garbois in *102*.

On the same day as Barrett's benefit the *Organ* announced that "Dan Marble and Mr. Darrow will both make their appearance upon the boards of this city, during the present week. Look out for good acting, fine sport, plenty of fun, full houses and everything that is calculated to interest and amuse the theatre-going public." All these pleasant things may have come to pass as predicted, but if Darrow had a hand in them, I have found no trace of it. Maybe he acted on some unheralded minor stage. Marble, however, did show up for his annual fall visit which was of its usual complexion. He ran through his established successes though he did vary the diet a little with one appearance as Tom Cringle (presumably in *Tom Cringle's Log* though in the advertisement the last word is omitted) and two as William in *Black Eyed Susan*.

Smith evidently had a friend on the staff of the *Organ* because on the twentieth, the day of Marble's opening, that daily gave forth a long drawn-out encomium upon the virtues of the junior partner

[12]Odell: *Annals*, III, 150.

which must have made the senior grit his teeth. A polite compliment tossed the latter in an off-hand manner probably made it even harder to swallow. Sol is depicted as a white-haired philanthropist—his hair was black or dark brown—who from youth to old age "has been laboring hard—day and night—in storm and sunshine—through prosperity and adversity—through sickness and health—through good and evil of every name and nature—to keep the public in good humor." There follows the casual reference to Ludlow as "one of the most gentlemanly, high-minded, generous partners that could be picked between sunrise and sundown." Bitter as must have been to the taste of Ludlow, the laurels with which Sol was crowned more galling still must have been the calm assumption that he was little more than an appendage. It was Sol who was planted front centre as the *deux ex machina.*

And how have we all requited the generous efforts of the *venerable* old fellow? Does nobody's conscience accuse him? Do we *forget* the thousands which have perished by fire?[18] Have we any bowels of mercy? Any sympathy? Any generosity? Any gratitude? How many of us think of him nightly and his unwearied efforts to make the drama what it is in St. Louis—chaste, spirited, entertaining, instructive and moral? We fairly blush when we think of his nightly audiences—Oh mention them not!

Will any body propose a rousing benefit for him?

I wonder if Ludlow was to be allowed to lick the platter.

As soon as Marble had gone his ways a newcomer was introduced to such St. Louis audiences as could be found in the near-empty spaces of the Theatre, the newcomer who seems to have been responsible for Maynard's temporary eclipse. This was J. A. J.—Andrew Jackson—Neafie, described in the paper (September 28) as "a performer of good standing in the Eastern Theatres." The correspondence of the firm reveals that he had been in treaty with the managers for a position under their banner for something over a year. On April 21, 1841, he had, at the suggestion of Edwin Forrest, made the first approach, expressing a wish "to play seconds to stars, and the leading heavy business." Forrest wrote of him, "Mr. Neafie's moral character is I believe unblemished, he is sober,

[18]On July 30, 1842, Ludlow and Smith's American Theatre in New Orleans had been burned to the ground. (Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 551.)

and industrious, and with theatrical ability to discharge very creditably the heavy business of the stage. Such characters as Gesler, Appius Claudius, &. On all occasions where Mr. Neafie has been engaged with me, he has been very perfect in the text."[14] The Letter Book shows that negotiations were resumed the following spring (1842), but that his reply to the managers' offer had not been received soon enough, and they "had been obliged to make other arrangements." At the same time, they offered him a place in the fall at a weekly salary of no more than $20.[15]

Neafie is described by Dr. Odell as "a mere beginner, who made a pretty success, and started on a career that was to place him high in the second rank of tragedians."[16] This was in February, 1838, and contradicts the assertions of Allston Brown to the effect that his debut was made in 1839, when he paid Simpson $300 to be allowed to act Othello at the Park.[17] According to Phelps, he had been a carpenter, and the necessary sum was subscribed "by a military company, of which Neafie was commander."[18] It is evident that he had for the time being put by thoughts of stardom, perhaps in a wise attempt to gain experience, and for about two years remained with Ludlow and Smith, "and became a favorite."

Yet it was as a star that he was first presented to St. Louis, as Julian St. Pierre in Knowles' *The Wife*, supported by Mrs. Farren, Maynard, Eddy, Farren, and Lake. He pleased the representative of the *Organ*, who on the thirtieth, commended his clear enunciation and his reading. This stardom, as it turned out, was of short duration, for he soon took his place among the regular members of the company in the capacity indicated in his letter. But before this occurred, he was allowed to show his mettle as Shylock and as Clifford in *The Hunchback*.

After October 1 Neafie's name lingered on in capitals for a few days, but it was no longer by itself, and soon it was relegated to the commonplace. October saw the arrival of two stars, the first an old friend, the other a stranger. The former was E. S. Conner,

[14]Edwin Forrest to Ludlow and Smith, May 26, 1841.
[15]June 5, 1842.
[16]Odell. *Annals*, IV, 202.
[17]Brown: *American Stage*.
[18]Phelps: *Players of a Century*, 269.

returning to the scene of his earlier conquests, the latter Mrs. Ann Sefton, better known as Mrs. James Wallack, Jr. She was a scion of the famous Placide family, being a daughter of Caroline Placide by her first husband, Leigh Waring. For many years she was a prominent figure on the stage, but never achieved the position achieved by some of her blood relatives or by those of her second husband. This couple was first seen in *The Lady of Lyons* with Conner once more in the familiar costumes of the gardener's son, and Mrs. Sefton ousting Mary Ann Farren from her usual refuge in his arms at the final curtain. But, to show her versatility, the lady ended up the evening as Harry Halycon in *The Middy Ashore*. She had a good figure, and she saw no reason why she should not make the most of it. Their second bill was composed of *Richelieu* and *The Loan of a Lover* with Smith, as Peter Spyk, joining in the fun of the latter, and Neafie and Eddy as De Mauprat and Baradas respectively in the former. Conner was seen only as the Cardinal.

Perhaps the best feature of this joint engagement, as in the case of Conner's first, in 1840, was the improvement in the quality of plays produced. Among them were four of Shakespeare's, the first (except *Catharine and Petruchio*) the St. Louis public had had a chance to enjoy all year. First seen was *Romeo and Juliet* with Mrs. Sefton, still conscious of her shape, donning the tights of Romeo to make poetic addresses to Mrs. Farren. Ludlow surrendered his beloved Mercutio to Conner, Neafie, I suppose as "leading heavy," taking over "the bloody Tybalt." For the only account of this performance extant we must turn to the weekly, instead of the usual daily, edition of the *People's Organ* in its issue of October 12. "When Mrs. Farren (as Juliet) repeated the line—'Oh Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?' an auditor in the gallery set the house in a roar by answering 'Because, ma'am, Old Sol thought it would be a *strong cast* and draw a good house.'"

Richard III (on the eighth) brought the lady star a much less showy role, merely the Queen, but Conner was restored to primacy and had his chance at one of the most popular of all hero-villains. Richmond was assigned to Neafie, Buckingham to Eddy, the Lady Anne to Mrs. Farren, and the Duchess of York to Mrs. Russell. On this evening Ludlow contented himself with the very unspectacular

role of Tressel. Three nights later Conner and Neafie were pitted against each other as Othello and Iago, while Mrs. Sefton, oddly enough, elected to play Emilia, leaving Desdemona to Mrs. Farren. Ludlow was back in the kind of role he liked best, this time Cassio. The twelfth saw the end of the all-too-brief Shakespearean interlude. The play was *Macbeth* with the stars in the leads, and Mrs. Farren this time as the First Singing Witch! Neafie was the Macduff, and Ludlow the Banquo.

Thus was the Bard of Avon accounted for, for the time being. There were, however, other works of greater substance than recent fare, and some of these the visitors took down from the shelf. *Pizarro*, *Damon and Pythias*, *Tortesa the Usurer*, *Adelgitha*, *La Tour de Nesle*, and *The Lady of Lyons* (some of which had been seen recently) may not impress us as dramatic masterpieces, but they must have been welcome after the insubstantial offerings which had of late been dominating the stage. A puff on October 6 assured the readers of the *Organ* that the "community seems fully alive to the merits of the performances now nightly advertised at our theatre. Crowded audiences assemble to witness the representation of the good old tragedies and comedies." Perhaps.

Weaker in a literary sense were three novelties, *The Carpenter of Rouen*, *The Six Degrees of Crime*, and *The Avenger* or *The Moor of Sicily*, in which the stars also were presented. The first of these enjoyed three consecutive performances with two more later on, one of them with a different star. Both the others were given twice during the engagement, and *The Six Degrees*, a horrific sermon if there ever was one, was revived once again with Eddy, instead of Conner, treading the primrose path which led to the scaffold. But Mrs. Sefton and Conner did not limit themselves to the serious; they also lent their best efforts to various attendant after-pieces, ranging from *The Poor Soldier* to *Nick of the Woods*, though not always in the same casts. Their engagement extended from the first to the twenty-fifth.

During this period the whole company as well as the visitors, took one evening off to come to the aid of an unfortunate colleague. James Thorne was approaching the end of his earthly career, and his friends united to help him as best they could. On the thirteenth the

Organ published this item: "Jemmy Thorne—Baron Pompolino—Mark Meddle—Peter Spyke—and ever so many other *Aliases*" was to have a benefit.

. . . . it is highly creditable to Old Sol, and the smiling gentleman, his partner, and to all the theatrical corps, that they have *volunteered* on the occasion. . . . Jemmy, alias etc., etc., etc., has been for a long time laid up with severe illness, and is now just able to move out. . . .

The *Republican* espoused the invalid's cause, saying that "it will please the old man's heart, and assist his depleted purse, to find a full house on this particular occasion." So on October 14 the following "unparalleled and most powerful cast" joined forces in *The School for Scandal:* Sir Peter—Barrett; Sir Benjamin Backbite ("for this occasion only")—Conner; Sir Oliver Surface—Farren; Charles Surface—Ludlow; Joseph Surface—Neafie; Crabtree ("for one night only")—Thorne; Careless—Eddy; Rowley—Newton; Moses—Lake; Snake—Bingham; Trip—Russell; James—Mack; Lady Teazle—Mrs. Sefton, Mrs. Candour ("for this time")—Mrs. Farren; Lady Sneerwell—Mrs. Russell; Maria—Miss Helen Matthews. The next summer Thorne died at sea en route to England.

October 29 might have been a notable date in the stage history of St. Louis, but I fear it was nothing of the sort. On that evening a new original tragedy from the hand of "a gentleman of this city" (the author of *Mormonism*?) first saw the glow of the footlights, but it was doomed to see them only twice and so not to go down to posterity as "the great American tragedy." Yet I wonder if any other tragedy ever had quite the build-up given it by one *D* who used the *Organ* as the medium for his style of publicity.

Hip, hurrah—hubbaboo whack—away goes "Berilda" to night at the Theatre! "The Saint Louis Tragedy" comes off certain and sure —them's 'um! Now boys get your gals and march—and dont forget to have the *bustle behind*—and the way this play is going to take the shine off—is a caution.—The way that Neafie will do up "Rhodolpho," is a sin, and Mrs. Farren's personation of "Berilda," will be a thunderbolt to Eastern dramatists. Wonder why they dont bring out the author—or may be he is not willing to let it come out—no matter we'll all go and see the *show* any how, and I'm certain that the house will be crowded from parquette to gallery. Now boys

dont forget to go. Ladies, dont forget to *ring* up your *beaux* [a very modern-sounding phrase]; and old literati of St. Louis, make good your promise, and let the St. Louis Tragedy go off with a perfect rush.

After this blast anything would be an anti-climax, but it may be worth noting that this was Neafie's night, and that one W. R. P. assured the public that in "private life Mr. Neafie is without a blemish."[19] Furthermore, the cast of this masterpiece included Neafie himself as Rodolpho, Eddy as Prince Beppo, Farren as Geraldi, Lake as Antonio, Russell as Vicenti, Mrs. Farren as Berilda, Mrs. Warren as Cephania, Miss Matthews as Lucretia, and "Ladies of the Court, by the company."

The season continued on its course in the rut of "normalcy," the only unfamiliar piece which seems worth mentioning being Buckstone's "new drama" of *A Dream at Sea* in which Mary Ann Farren had the pleasure of depicting a lady by the entrancing name of Biddy Nutts. Beyond the fact that the usual principals were involved and that there was a single repetition, I know nothing more of this relic of the past.

But from the *Organ* of November 2 we do glean a trifle of some consequence. This is a comment upon the nature of the proceedings at Third and Olive which really comes down to brass tacks and tells us something. I am sorry that the writer signed himself only *M* because I should like to be able to give credit where it is due.

> Indiscriminate praise and flattery have been bestowed by the press upon the Theatre, and upon every thing and every person connected with it. The untiring zeal and industry of Messrs. Ludlow & Smith, is well known, worthy of praise and deserving of success. We despise that criticism made for the vain purpose of showing exquisite taste, or *affecting*, superior discrimination; and that sometimes made by the press, *not* receiving the advertising patronage, through spleen; but things exceedingly faulty, may be remedied by *candid* censure.
>
> The entertainments given at the Theatre for the last few months, "take them all in all," have been very good—but some of the actors during the entire season, have been *tolerated*, night after night, to be imperfect in their parts, and villainously to murder the original, and the King's English by their own miserable substitutions.

[19] *People's Organ*, October 25, 1842.

Mr. Eddy, who has many good qualities as an actor, and whose ambition should lead him to better things, is, perhaps, most at fault in this respect—in fact, he is seldom at ease out of hearing of the prompter, and his substitutions are grating to one at all nervous. Those who witnessed the Lady of the Lake on Saturday evening, will bear witness to this:—"I knows it" is exceeding bad grammar as Mr. Eddy ought to know, and "injust," a word not found in any of the dictionaries—a hundred other cases of olden date might be named, equally faulty. He should "reform them altogether," and at the same time *learn how to dance*. The audience expects Mr. Newton to be imperfect, and are seldom disappointed. One or two others might justly be censured for the same faults, but enough has been said for all guilty, to take the hint.

It is pleasing, after being made uncomfortable by such excrutiating readings, to see Mrs. Farren appear. It serves to put one in better temper, and is, sometimes, all there is to make the whole performance tolerable. It is but justice to say that Mr. Neafie is a good reader and a sterling actor.

I should think this outspoken criticism would have been as embarrassing to the managers as to the actors. What had become of their rules and regulations, their fines and penalties, their vaunted discipline? It would be dangerous to lay the blame on either one to the exclusion of the other. Their arrangement was that they were to alternate between the direction of the stage and the management of affairs "in the front of the house," but how scrupulously they adhered to this not even their diaries reveal. We do know that, so far as St. Louis was concerned, it was usually Ludlow who handled everything, because most of the time Smith was out of town, but the latter was here throughout most, if not all, the spring season and for a while in the fall. Of course, if Ludlow was in charge of affairs backstage, there was, according to their agreement, little his partner could do, though we do know from their diaries that quarrels did occasionally arise on the stage. Whoever was to blame, at this distance at least, I can see little excuse for such flagrant solecisms.

"About the middle of November," says Ludlow, "our audiences, which had not been very extensive for some weeks, began to show evident signs of shrinkage, and a sensitiveness to the touch of Jack Frost; and the wild geese—sensible birds!—were flying southward, and I determined to follow their example."[20]

[20]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 555.

Lake. On the first night it was preceded by *The Wedding Ring* (with the two Farrens) as a curtain raiser, an honor accorded the next evening to *No!* On the twenty-fifth, for some reason or other, the tragedy was permitted to stand on its own feet, but on the last night of the season it was coupled with *Perfection,* and, what is more, George Barrett assumed the kingly robes of Gustavus. It is too bad that the local critics missed their chance. Surely, M., D., or W. R. P., might have taken the pains to pass on to us some account of what actually happened, but none of them did, and so we are left in the dark. It seems to me that, had his experiment met with resounding success, the happy manager would have had something to say about it in his memoirs, but he is as silent as the initialed gentry. So maybe the scheme was not as good as it had promised to be.

At all events, he had now finished his chores in St. Louis and followed the wild geese in the direction of Vicksburg, where he remained until summoned by Sol to move into their handsome new home in New Orleans.

So far as St. Louis is concerned, 1842 was of little consequence in the careers of Ludlow and Smith. The scene of their major calamities and achievements was hundreds of miles to the south, and, since this book is not primarily a chronicle of the ups and downs of this famous firm in its various habitats, but chiefly a record of local events dramatic, a lengthy discussion of their fortunes in other settings would be out of place. Yet what happened to them elsewhere did have its effect upon their St. Louis endeavors. On July 30, 1842, their New Orleans theatre, the American in Poydras Street, went up in flames. The owners of the ground assured them that by the time they were ready to open their winter season, they would find a new building ready to house them. One of the owners, however, played them false, and secretly leased the new structure to their deadly rival, James H. Caldwell. So, suddenly in the midst of their anxieties, they learned that, with a full company and a full complement of stars under contract, they had no place to go. But such a crisis was a challenge to a man of Smith's courage and shrewdness, and by skillful maneuvering (to which Ludlow pays his tribute) he succeeded in having a new theatre erected in no more than forty days on the site of Caldwell's St. Charles Theatre, which had burned down

MRS FANNY FITZWILLIAM

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

J. A. NEAFIE

AS RICHARD III

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

a short time before. He also showed that he was cleverer than the enemy when it came to maneuvers and tactics, and the outcome was the complete discomfiture of the latter, who even before the new St. Charles opened its doors, retired from the field never to return. This outcome left Ludlow and Smith in a very strong position, the more so as they shortly took over Caldwell's Mobile house as well, and so occupied an unusually strategic position when they talked turkey to stars and other actors.

It so happened that during the fall of 1842, on November 1 to be exact, the partnership had expired. Had the two men been masters of their fates, this day would assuredly have marked the end of their unhappy association, but, since the firm was in debt, they were unwilling to dissolve it. In their respective diaries both partners recorded their grievances and their doubts, distrusts, and vexations. Yet both felt that for a time all these must be borne. In the end that *time* turned out to be eleven years more. Near the end of his book Smith gives some of his reasons for remaining so long in a distasteful position. He says that, had he withdrawn from the theatrical business in 1838 when the St. Emanuel Theatre in Mobile burned, and embarked on the journalistic career he at least had thought he craved, he could have paid all his debts and "had something handsome left, say twenty thousand dollars in money and lands."

. . . . If the burning of the theatre had occurred before I sold out my printing-office, I should probably have resigned the reins of management and taken up the editorial pen; but the conflagration happened a few days *after* my sale of the newspaper, and I was doomed to slavery for many years, for my business then began to sink me into debt, which I did not get entirely out of until 1848 and to be in debt is to be in slavery, as every body knows who has tried it. So I struggled on—on—on, year after year, *all the time dreading that I should die* IN DEBT, and leave my family unprovided for (and oh! what a thought is *that*!), until at last, under the blessings of a kind Providence, I achieved my liberty.

In his diary, under date of October 19, he made the following entry:

Previous to leaving St. Louis, had an informal understanding with my partner, Mr. Ludlow, that our partnership, which expires on the

1st of next month, shall be *renewed,* with the stipulation that as soon as our *debts* shall be paid, we shall dissolve, one of us retiring from the concern,—on the principle of "give or take"—that is one of us shall make the offer, and the other shall give or take. . . .

That Ludlow shared Smith's sentiments, page after page of his diary supplies the proof. So, though informally, the firm continued, and the two unwilling partners floated down the Father of Waters, though not at the same time, to face the problems which awaited them near its mouth.

VIII

DARKNESS VISIBLE

1843

. . . Your father is lying on the bed cursing his luck for the theatre is to be sold in half an hour from now.

So wrote Mat Field to his wife, the former Cornelia Ludlow, on April 29, 1843.

To such a sorry pass had Fate and hard times brought the distressed managers of the St. Louis Theatre. Their stronghold was sold "under a deed of trust for $20,000, being a sum borrowed in 1837 to pay the cost of doing the work of the building so far as to allow it to be opened for business, though not enough to finish it entirely in accordance with its design."[1]

. . . The property was bought by Mr. George Collier of St. Louis, for the amount of the debt; the property that had cost the stockholders $78,000. By this sale Ludlow & Smith lost $7,000, the amount of the stock held by them.

Collier was a prominent businessman, who appears to have been not unfriendly to the managers, but at the same time naturally was concerned to see that he was not left "holding the bag." He attempted to organize a new company to absorb the stock, and Ludlow too evolved a scheme of his own, but both came to naught. In the end Collier rented the building to the tenants for $3,000 a year. This was a new and unpleasant arrangement to which the latter had to adjust themselves. They did not relish it, and Ludlow's diary for the summer months of 1844 reveals various maneuvers to arrive at a different agreement.

Messrs. Ludlow and Smith would probably, if it were possible to consult them, find in the year 1843, so far as St. Louis was concerned, even less to recommend than they had found in its immediate predecessor. Though to the South their fortunes improved, up the Mississippi the pattern was much the same.

[1]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 572.

The year started off with the same abundance of lectures and concerts, and an even more intense discussion of mesmerism, this time with Dr. Joseph McDowell entering the lists to debunk the revelations of one "Dr." Boynton, who had recently given demonstrations at Concert Hall.[2] That he was not altogether successful in persuading the public that animal magnetism was a hoax is proved by a communication addressed to the editor of the *Republican* and printed on March 31, attesting to the faith of such eminent citizens as Henry T. Blow, Daniel D. Page, Edward Charless, and Joseph Stettinius. On January 9 McDowell himself had been the subject, if not the butt, of the humor of a certain C. Whitney, "Lecturer on Oratory," who had on that evening treated his audience, for the sum of 25 cents, to imitations of the eminent surgeon. "There will be fun in this, for the Doctor will not stand it if he is not truly represented. So the audience may have more than they expect."[3] In March George Field, whoever he was, gave at Mechanics Hall a series of lectures on the Creation, that on the seventh, for example, treating of "THE CREATION OF THE SUN, EARTH, AND OTHER PLANETS."[4] There was also a steady stream of singers, dancers, ventriloquists, and Italian *Fantoccini*. In other words, there was no dearth of entertainment.

One surprising item gleaned from the press is that our old friend Gentleman George Barrett had for the time being abandoned his lifelong profession—he was now forty-nine years old and had been on the stage since infancy—and taken up a new one, that of restauranteur. His establishment stood at 21 Chestnut Street. Just how talented the famous comedian was when it came to providing culinary delicacies, I cannot say, but of one thing there can be no doubt: the tone of his

[2] *Missouri Republican*, March 4, 1843.

[3] *Ibid.*, January 9, 1843. Joseph Nash McDowell (1805-1868) had come to St. Louis from Cincinnati in 1840, and soon founded the medical department of Kemper College (later McDowell's Medical College, and ultimately the Medical School of Washington University). "He was not only one of the most skillful surgeons of his day, but was a polished orator, and had a happy faculty of adapting himself to any audience" (Hyde and Conard: *Encyclopedia History of St. Louis*). One of his eccentricities was his endeavor to preserve the bodies of his deceased relatives in alcohol, and then hang them like stalactites from the roof of a cave (*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, April 29, 1945).

[4] *Ibid.*, March 7, 1843.

restaurant was one of gentility and elegance, with assuredly no "EAT" in crimson neon lights over the sidewalk. Of Barrett, says Laurence Hutton in his *Plays and Players:* "His manners both on and off stage were elegant; he had a courtly old-fashioned style about him that was inimitable, and he certainly deserved the appellation of which he was so proud. . . ."[5] So as Mine Host he must have been in his element. But he could not wholly divorce himself from his old associations, and he took pride in drawing up his menus elaborately in the form of theatre programs.

BARRETT'S

NO. 21 CHESTNUT STREET

In wishing my friends and patrons a Happy New Year, it may not be amiss to say something of my late change of character. Having left the STAGE for the BAR, I am ready to attend all cases that may be entrusted to my care. My FEES will be moderate, and my attentions to my CLIENTS unremitting; and though I have not yet completed my study of BACON, I have a new treatise on beefsteaks.

"If it were DONE, when 'tis DONE,
Then 't were well that it were DONE quickly."

I have done forever with "Love a la mode," but for the Beef a la mode I yield to no man in wielding the KNIFE. I hope my "Cure for the Heart Ache" will [not] prove the "Road to Ruin," and may the "Two Friends" never prove "Inconstant," to the "Poor Gentleman," who in "Raising the Wind" has "Secrets worth Knowing," which, the ["]Deuce is in Him" if he'll not convince the "Dramatist" he's no "Liar," and that it is not "Much ado about Nothing;" and though on "His Last Legs," he is determined to "Speed the Plough" and renounce forever the "School for Scandal," with the sincere hope that the "Good Natured Man" will always have "Money" to out do "London Assurance" and receive everything in my way "As You Like It."[6]

A generous host, Barrett believed in scattering his blessings, and in the issue of March 10 the editor of the *Republican* testifies to the delights of a pie sent over as an unburnt offering to the toiling journalists.

[5]P.114.

[6]*Missouri Republican,* January 2, 1843.

One welcome aid to our understanding of the two seasons of 1843 is the unaccustomed accuracy of Ludlow's account of them. For some unexplained reason he got most, though by no means all, of his facts straight, and so his narrative for that year has unusual value. On the whole, it gibes, not only with the version from the pen of his partner—in this instance so laconic as to be of negligible assistance—but also with the data furnished by the newspapers and by various letters and diaries, of which last his own is the most important, still extant.

"We are in the dead vast and middle of the night. Probably the worst theatrical season—financially—in the range of New York history is now to be recorded. Business depression shut pocketbooks to an almost unprecedented degree. The playhouses suffered frightfully, reducing prices of admission to an almost ridiculous minimum, and paying the actors, when paying at all, a wage that would have been scorned by a skilful mechanic."[7] It is, of course, of New York that Dr. Odell is writing here, but Ludlow and Smith would probably claim a share in the title of his chapter, "The Nadir." Ludlow records only failing engagements from May to November, and concludes his story with the statement that they lost hundreds of dollars.[8] All Smith troubles himself to say is that the season "closed on a considerable loss."[9] Both men were interested in other phases of their careers and were content to let this profitless season pass with little comment.

With the season opening under the depressing circumstances it did, Ludlow turned for help to the city officials. He invited Mayor John M. Wimer and Recorder M. L. Clark to the Theatre. What the latter replied, I don't know, but Ludlow wrote in his diary on the thirteenth that His Honor had declined the invitation because "he belonged to the church," an answer which I am sure did not sit well. Such an attitude was unquestionably responsible for the manager's pronounced aversion to organized churches and clergymen. He had heard the profession to which he had dedicated his life subjected to too many unjust attacks to be expected to feel otherwise. (Before his death, however, he did join the Episcopal Church.)

[7]Odell. *Annals*, IV, 603.
[8]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 573-579.
[9]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 175.

On May 16 the *Republican* informed its readers (as did also the *Missouri Reporter* the following day) that the theatrical corps was to have started from New Orleans on the eleventh, and named some of the players who might be expected: ". . . . among those engaged are Neafie, the Misses Chapman, Mr. and Mrs. Eddy and others. Kirby plays an engagement of six nights at the commencement, and the comedians De Bar and W. Chapman are also engaged." All of these persons, except the last two, presumably were on the *Highlander* when it shoved its nose into the levee on the seventeenth.

The St. Louis spring season of 1843 commenced on the 20th of May, with the comedy of the "Honeymoon," and the "Actress of Allwork" [*sic*], Miss C. Chapman in the *Actress*. Receipts of the night a trifle over $150. There was a large mass-meeting at the court-house, which doubtless kept many persons from going to the theatre; they preferred amusement that cost nothing.[10]

Details of this performance are supplied by the advertisement in the *Reporter*—once more we find the *Republican* for the most part standing aside—and from it we learn that Ludlow himself played the Duke Aranza with, inevitably, Mrs. Farren as Juliana. Neafie appeared as Rolando, Caroline Chapman as Volante, and Farren as Lampedo. New to us are "Mr. H. Chapman" and "Mrs. Hamilton." About the former we shall hear more, but, although the latter is occasionally mentioned in later publicity items, she is never identified, unless we are to conclude that she was the wife of a Mr. Hamilton who had played with the company at the St. Charles a few months before.

Ludlow goes on to say that Caroline Chapman played a two weeks' engagement as a star, "taking a benefit on her last night. This last night of hers was given to a house tolerably well filled; indeed, it might be said to be a good house, considering the times. This excellent actress, although highly pleasing those who witnessed her acting, could not draw full houses, owing to the general stagnation existing at the time." This really talented young lady unintentionally led her manager into one of the relatively few errors in his account of the year's proceedings, for she did not, as he certainly implies, depart from the scene after her fortnight. This we know

[10]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 573.

because on July 17, the *Republican* mentions in laudatory terms the contributions of "Miss Chapman" to a performance of *La Bayadere*, and I am sure it was not referring to Theresa, the elder sister being "Miss Chapman." Furthermore, when the Seguin opera troupe was in town in August, Caroline refused to "go on in *Choruses* and said she was willing to *cancel her engagement* at any time."[11] In September she was still on hand, and "Miss Chapman found fault because she was not cast for Kate O'Brien in *Perfection*—left her out of Susan—Put her into Mary in Dumb Belle, which she objected to—took her out of it." This last from the diary on September 5.

The Chapmans were quite a family. The *pater familias*, William, Sr., came out of England with his brood in the 1820's and, after some more or less successful years in New York, constituted himself as probably the original prototype of Miss Ferber's Captain Andy Hawks, for, if not actually the father of the show boat—as he probably was—he was certainly one of its first promoters. Ludlow thinks he first encountered him and his offspring on their ancestor of the *Cotton Blossom* on the Ohio River in 1831 or 1832. At all events, the boat, whatever its name, plied that stream and the Mississippi until the "old man's" death, which, according to Ludlow, occurred in 1840. Of his five children, William B., Jr., and Caroline lived to attain enviable places on the stage of their adopted country. Of the latter, who must have been about twenty-five at this time, the St. Louis manager says: "She got her early training performing in her father's floating theatre on the Western waters, and excellent training it proved to be; she has never been equalled in versatility and finish, in her lines of business by any lady that has appeared upon the stages of America, excepting only Clara Fisher and Mrs. Fitzwilliam."[12] William, Jr., was a comedian of uncommon skill and a great favorite. Theresa we have already mentioned. Young Henry was a nephew, the son of the late Samuel Chapman.

Smith is clearly in error when he declares that "Yankee" Hill was the star of the opening night. We have already seen the casts of that occasion, and his name nowhere appears. Actually the first

[11]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, August 1, 1843.
[12]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 570.

star was Joseph Hudson Kirby, to whom Sol assigns second place.[18] Seemingly not discouraged by the failure of the pit to rise at him the previous fall, this paragon returned expectantly to give the St. Louis public another chance. To put his best foot forward once more, he opened his proceedings with his version of Richard III. I suspect that to have seen that classic interpretation once was never to forget it. At the same time at least two of the local critics seem to have found it possible to control their raptures. On May 24 he of the *Republican* gave its readers the benefit of his judgment.

We witnessed Mr. Kirby's performance of the Crook Back Tyrant, on Monday evening, and barring some slight defects which time may cure, it was a fair representation. Mr. Kirby, by nature, possesses many good qualifications for an actor—his voice is deep, full and sonorous, and he has studied its modulation well—his actions are graceful and suited to the words he utters, which by the bye should be, and is the greatest study of an actor. In his reading of some sentences, he destroyed the full force of the author's meaning, by not minding his stops—this fault seldom occurred, however, and the general correct style of his reading would easily persuade the reader to overlook them. We confess that the appearance of Richard on the eve of battle, with a book in his hand calmly reading while all was excitement and bustle around him, looked to us the introduction of something new and out of place—we may be in error—it is a novelty, however, for often as we have witnessed Richard the Third, we have never seen it introduced before. The effectiveness of Mr. Kirby's closing scene was destroyed by the miserable combat swords which he cast the stake of his soul and body on; the first broke at the commencement of the combat, and the second became almost a useless defence before he had struck half a dozen blows.

The efforts of Mr. K. were well supported by the other characters in the piece, all being in theatrical parlance "up in their parts." Mr. Eddy's Buckingham was a much more correct performance in *words*, than his last appearance on the St. Louis boards in the same character, but we cannot observe much improvement in his style of acting. Mrs. Farren, of course, was correct—she does justice to any character the management casts her in.

One of the most vivid descriptions of Kirby's Richard was printed in the *St. Louis Reveille*, reprinted from the *London Observer*, some eighteen months later. Since it probably is a fairly accurate depiction

[18]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 174.

of his histrionic display on the present occasion as well, I shall quote a part of it.

. . . . It may be American to call a creature a "critter," and a squirrel a "coon;" but until now no one in this country ever conceived the idea of calling a horse a "hearse," until Mr. Hudson Kirby came among us—

"A *hearse*, a *hearse*, my Kingdom for a *hearse*," he shouted, and the reply was a peal of laughter. He had no "mutes" in attendance, even among his own friends. His most striking passage, however, was his last scene—namely, the single-handed fight between him and the representative of Richmond. It was a regular Yankee "gouging" match. First, he fought with his sword, next he fought on his stumps, like Widdington, in the ballad of "Chevy Chase," and again he fought on his legs three several times round, handling his iron the while, as "young Jabeth Dollar" did his "Arkansas toothpick" in the hall of Congress; and finally, when he fell, he turned himself on his back like a bottle-nosed whale, and kicked while he had a kick left in him . . . .[14]

Making all due allowance for British "superiority," we should still remember Kirby's soubriquet, "Wake-me-up-when-Kirby-dies," before we dismiss this as straight exaggeration, though it is, of course, possible that when in St. Louis the star had not as yet built up his effects to their full potency.

Leaving him for the moment, I should like to call attention to the line commending the actors for having memorized their parts before coming on the stage. That compliment is not without its significance. And as for Eddy, this was of course the Edward of that name later, in Dr. Odell's words, "the idol of the Bowery boys, and not without honour in the Broadway Theatre in 1847. He had every attribute, in looks, voice and manner, to ring and stride through the vast stage-spaces of those early houses."[15] Can it be that early association with Kirby had left its mark upon the aspiring tragedian?

The afterpiece to *Richard* was *The Married Rake*, which "drew forth rounds of laughter and applause" due chiefly to the Mrs. Trictrac of Caroline Chapman, who, it was predicted by the *Republican*, would soon become a great favorite, for "there is mirth and mischief in every lineament of her countenance. The present

[14]*St. Louis Reveille*, January 7, 1845.
[15]Odell: *Annals*, V, 218.

company," concludes the critic, "in our opinion, is one of decided talent, and we hope it will receive from the St. Louis public a liberal support." This boost despite the lack of advertising shows good will on the part of someone.

The gouging Richard may not have proved a profitable investment, but in his diary on May 23 the manager wrote, "*Notified Kirby* that we should extend his engagement for 5 more nights." The question is, why? His second role was Sir Giles Overreach in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, which attracted only $97.00. "No other attraction against us this night & weather favorable & 3d night of the season—(O!!!)." So, dejectedly, did the unhappy manager appraise his situation before trying to forget his troubles in sleep. On the next night's *The Lady of Lyons* he passed no remarks, but on the twenty-fifth, after *Damon and Pythias*, he added, "Kirby's 4th night. He does not attract—night clear & no counter attraction." On his opening night there had been a "counter attraction," and again on the twenty-sixth; these were concerts at the Planters House by Max Bohrer, violinist to the King of Wurtemberg, and L. Rakemann, "pianist from New York." In his diary on the latter evening (for which, by the way, there were no advertisements in the papers) Ludlow ruefully entered the proceeds which had on those two evenings found their way into the wrong tills—"about $150" and "about 130." Incidentally he also noted that, his month at the Planters being up, he "Commenced Sleeping at the Theatre last night."

On May 27 the pièce de résistance was *Pizarro*, and on the next evening the star took his first benefit The *Republican's* critic once more helps us to further understanding.

THE DRAMA—Kirby played Lear *middling* on Monday night, to a middling house for his benefit. If a number of those who performed the minor characters in the play, had made themselves a little more familiar with the text, it would have added much to the general performance of the piece, and their individual reputations. Among those correct may be named Mr. Neafie, whose performances in his rounds of characters, gives general satisfaction. The only fault we have with Mr. Neafie is his too forcible manner—he *rushes* through everything, or in more common parlance is disposed to *rant*. If his manner and action were a little more subdued, it would add to the effectiveness of his acting. Mrs. Farren's performance of Cor-

delia was good—she seldom performs a part *bad*. If Kirby would stimulate a little less he would become a favorite; dissipation detracts from body, mind and reputation, and we thought the rebuke he received in Cincinnati would remain a lasting lesson in his memory.

The afterpiece of the Pirate Day afforded much amusement—the Yankee character performed by Mr. H. Chapman drew rounds of applause, and is deserving of praise—Chapman has the true comic humor to him. Kirby plays the sailor well—in our opinion better than Marble.

Ludlow's diary confirms the suspicions of the critic concerning the star's sobriety or, rather, lack of it. "Kirby drunk during the Farce in my opinion. Indeed he is seldom otherwise before he gets through the nights performance." Can this explain the marvelous death throes? But Kirby's habits can not have taken the manager by surprise. Nearly three years before, when the firm first opened a correspondence with him, the subject was alluded to. "As you are a perfect stranger to us, you will excuse our intimating to you that any person who neglects his Business, either from Intemperate habits or other cause, is Liable to be Discharged without a moment's notice, from our employment. On the contrary, those who are attentive to their Duties & correct in their Habits receive all proper encouragement from us."[16] It was probably no coincidence that this letter was written immediately after the visit of Augustus Addams. Why, then, was Ludlow so lax now? I am beginning to suspect that he lacked the energy and strength to control those in his employ. In this connection it wll be observed that the charm had been broken. No longer are the ladies and the gentlemen complimented on being "up in their parts." Again this fact seems to me to denote weakness in the manager.

On May 30 manager and star joined in blazing forth a moral which was not without its appositeness. This was the thriller entitled *Six Degrees of Crime* with a sub-title (given by Dr. Odell) which should have curdled the blood of all those who were contemplating the first downward step, *Wine, Women, Gambling, Theft, and the Scaffold*. Look before you leap, Mr. Kirby! This *chef d'oeuvre* was repeated the next night with *The Mountaineers*—Kirby as Octavian—as an antidote. Incidentally, as the annalist of

[16]Ludlow and Smith's Letter Book, September 21, 1840.

the New York Stage points out, there is more than a *soupçon* here of *George Barnwell*. Then this star engagement sped its way to a not unwelcome conclusion via *The Iron Chest* and *The Pirate Dey, William Tell* and *The Two Drovers*, and *Richard III* and *Jackets of Blue*. June 3 saw the last of Kirby.

Before dismissing him altogether, however, I shall quote a few observations set down by the emissary of the *Reporter*, whose review is very restrained, well written, and intelligent. He begins by saying that, while he has been attending the performances, he has waited to give the company "time to settle down" before passing judgment upon their efforts. Kirby, he avers, "certainly possesses real genius; his conception of the characters which he personates is generally good, but his enunciation is indistinct, hurried, and careless. The modulations of his voice are too violent, parts of sentences being uttered with great clearness and force and the remainder in so low and feeble a tone as to be wholly inaudible. Occasionally he indulges in a senseless rant, although we must in justice say that in this respect he is less faulty than most stars of greater celebrity. . . ."[17] This last observation may well give us pause. "So important do we regard distinct enunciation to be, that we should dislike much to rank Neafie, with his clear and full voice, below Kirby with his rapid utterance and sudden changes of intonation. In person and in articulation Neafie is superior to Kirby. His voice sometimes appears stiff and somewhat inflexible." To Eddy he can concede no improvement. "His voice is clear and rich, yet apparently beyond his control. We have been at a loss to decide whether his chief fault proceeds from an inflexibility of voice, or from an incorrect idea of the parts he represents. He rushes from one extreme to the other, regardless of propriety of action or of the sentiments he is uttering, as if mere *rant* was alone necessary to make a good actor, or as if it were impossible for him to raise his voice gradually as the change in feeling requires."

On Monday, June 5, Smith made his seasonal entry as Mr. Dingle in *Alice* or *Love and Reason* and as Philip Garbois in *102* or *A Veteran and his Progeny*. But his fellow-citizens did not rush out

[17] *Missouri Reporter*, June 7, 1843.

in crowds to greet him, the receipts, according to Ludlow's diary, amounting to a sorry $68.50. Between the two pieces the Chapman sisters contributed a duet, "Lightly May the Boat Row."

The way was now clear for Ben De Bar and William Chapman, who took over the stage, but regrettably (and, no doubt, regretfully) to what the *Republican* of June 10 describes as "rather thin houses." They merited a better reception. "The performance of Robert Macair by Mr. De Bar," asserts the same paper, "we consider equal to Brown's representation of the character; and Jacques Strop by W. Chapman far surpasses *Billy Williams'* efforts.[18] Those who witnessed this performance were frequently convulsed with laughter, not by the grimaces of the actor, for Chapman is not of the buffoon school, but the downright humor in look, words and action forced from the spectators rounds of applause."

The character of *Strapado* in the Dumb Girl of Genoa, was sustained on Wednesday evening by Mr. De Bar with signal ability—we are of the opinion that his Drunken Corporal cannot be surpassed—the fight between him and young H. Chapman was inimitable, and displayed comic powers of a high order.[19]

The critics may have laughed to their hearts' content over the antics of Mr. De Bar on the stage, but I doubt if the managers, singly or jointly, even smiled at some of his off-stage actions. On June 4 Ludlow recorded in his diary an agreement with his partner to the effect that "henceforth *Stars* should never be allowed any other than our *usual* bills for the Benefit—of which they could have an extra number if they choose to pay for them—& a card (at their expense) *two* days before the play day of their Benefit." Two days later we find this entry in the same journal: "De Bar had bills (against our Rules) out on Monday announcing in this manner The Artful Dodger. " I wonder if he was penalized.

Incidentally, in his diary on October 19, 1842, Smith had jotted down an observation to the effect that he believed "Ludlow notes

[18]Presumably W. H. Williams, an English comedian who had made his American debut at Wallack's National Theatre, New York, in 1838. (Odell: *Annals*, IV, 212.)

[19]*Missouri Republican*, June 10, 1843.

down every *conversation* or transaction which takes place between us." Half a month later he had written: "Mem. The Partnership of Ludlow & Smith expires with this day. As our affairs require that we shall continue together as partners, I have resolved to keep a book for our mutual use, to put down any resolution we may hereafter make in regard to business, which may lead to disputes in the future. I find this necessary, from the fact that *one of us—perhaps both*—seems to have lost his memory; at all events, some disagreements have taken place within the last two or three years, as to certain *facts*. The Book which I propose to open tomorrow will remedy these little lapses of memory."[20] What happened to this record, if it was ever started, I do not know. Ludlow kept his diary regularly and into it went the kind of items to which Smith refers, but the latter never was able to hold to his course very long when it came to his projected "line o' day."

But to return to St. Louis in the year 1843 and the two comedians who elicited the compliments quoted above. Compliments or no compliments, neither of these charmers could charm shekels into the managerial till, and they sadly followed Kirby out through the exit.

If the financially pinched St. Louisans did not feel like laughing (at a price), perhaps they might like to improve their minds. The apparent success of the innumerable lecturers and pseudo-educators who had been following hard upon each other's heels suggested that they did. So the two managers decided to give the public what it wanted. The result was Dr. Lardner.

Dionysius Lardner was quite an institution in England and the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. A professor of science at University College, London, and a prolific writer and lecturer on scientific subjects, and also a member of the Dickens-Macready circle, he was in 1840 indiscreet enough to elope with a married woman by the poetic name of *Heavyside*, and so thought it the part of wisdom to take flight to this country, where his escapades might be either unknown or overlooked. Once here, he set out on his peregrinations, sugar-coating the pills of culture with "dissolving views" manipulated by the later beloved comedian, George Holland. Omitted from his publicity was all reference to the similarity between

[20]Diary of Sol Smith, November 2, 1843.

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[20]Diary of Sol Smith, November 2, 1843.

his name and that of Dionysius Lardner Boucicault, the famous actor and playwright, who was almost certainly his natural son. But perhaps the omission was due to the fact that Boucicault was not yet a celebrity in his own right. In the future too were Thackeray's satires on "a literary quack advertising his cyclopaedia at dinner-parties" and of "Dionysius Diddler."[21] But, as it was, Ludlow and Smith evidently hoped that he had fame enough for their purposes, and sandwiched him in on alternate nights between the comedians until they departed, after which they presented him consecutively on the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first.

This was not the first contact between the two high contracting parties. The Doctor had already dispensed learning under the partners' auspices in their new theatre in New Orleans. But he came to St. Louis distinctly on his own. This he did on June 3, but he could find no suitable room available, and on the sixth the *Republican* announced that he was leaving for Louisville. But here Ludlow stepped into the picture. One thing is certain: the Doctor appreciated his own value, and in his opinion the laborer was worthy—nay, more than worthy—of his hire. His reply to the first overture of the Western managers before the St. Charles engagement is marked by a hauteur rivalling that of his friend Macready himself.

> I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th. The propositions therein contained are so entirely incompatible with all my engagements at other Theatres that I cannot for a moment entertain them. The lowest engagement I have ever accepted has been half the gross receipts, the Managers paying all the expenses & I will not consent in going South & West to accept lower terms. My audiences as you are probably aware (even in cases where the whole House has been raised to box price as at Chestnut Street) have been larger than any dramatc performer except Ellsler.
>
> Should none of the Theatres accept these terms my lectures can be delivered with nearly as much & in some respects with greater advantage in other places different from Theatres.[22]

As it turned out, however, this haughty mien could not be preserved without the loss of something more tangible than "face,"

[21] *Dictionary of National Biography.*

[22] Dionysius Lardner to Ludlow and Smith, August 1, 1842.

JOSEPH M. FIELD

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

GEORGE PERCY FARREN

(Courtesy of the Theatre Collection, Harvard College Library)

and, in the presence of hard facts, the Doctor could condescend to accept terms somewhat less exalted. I don't know what he got in New Orleans, but his St. Louis dealings have left footprints in the sands of time. At first, negotiations were carried on through the medium of Holland, but to no purpose. Then Dr. McDowell became the intermediary, and an accord was made.[23] He and the firm were to share after "$50 per night charges, he to pay his own printing, which was generally an expense of considerable amount."[24] Smith says, "The only thing I remember about the doctor's engagement is that my old friend George Holland . . . now appeared as Dr. Lardner's business agent and generator of his gases."[25] Apparently the programs in St. Louis included no skits, as the *Republican* announced: "As no dramatic or other theatrical performances will be produced on the same evening, it is hoped that the Theatre may be regarded on this occasion, merely as a building devoted to the diffusion of useful and elevating knowledge." The prices announced were: "Course tickets to admit a gentleman and two ladies, $8.00; a gentleman and one lady, $6.00; and one person, $3.50. Nightly admission to boxes and parquette, 75 cents." The lectures treated of "the most important discoveries in Astronomy and Physics."

There seems to have been in some quarters a fear that the local public would not rise to its opportunities, but might ignore the intellectual feast spread before it. A letter published in the *Republican* of June 12 says that St. Louis is reputed to take so little interest in science that it will not support a man of learning. But the writer defiantly picks up the gauntlet. "Now, my opinion is, that there is more sound intelligence in St. Louis, in proportion to its population, than any city in the Union; and now is the time to show it. . . . If there are those who would lavish eulogy on such a man as Dickens, we should show that there are others who are capable of appreciating

[23]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, June 3 and 6, 1843.

[24]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 575.

[25]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 175. George Holland was the genial and kindly comedian who is responsible for the designation of the Church of the Transfiguration in New York as "the Little Church Around the Corner." When on his death in 1870 his son and Joseph Jefferson III requested the Rev. Dr. W. T. Sabine to read the burial service, the clergyman refused because Holland had been an actor. On Jefferson's inquiring where he might find a someone to officiate, the minister replied, "Oh, there's a little church around the corner where they do that sort of thing."

the higher order of intellectual culture." Dickens versus Lardner. Luckily they were friends. I find this communication somewhat suspect. The ways of publicity could be just as devious in 1843 as a century later. However, St. Louis evidently did show the doubting Thomases that there were brains within its confines, for on the fourteenth the same paper reported that the first lecture was "fairly well attended" by an audience which included "intelligent females." "The lecture," continues the account, "was throughout deeply interesting, and was listened to with marked attention." The "philosophic portion of the evening's entertainment" was followed by "an exhibition by Mr. Holland of a series of beautiful views."

Thanks to the *Reporter* of June 12, we can learn something of what the Doctor's auditors learned on that first evening. Here is a part of the advertisement:

THE SUN

Its magnitude, weight, density. What are the sources of its light and heat? How does it affect the atmosphere? Explanation of the seasons. The Sun more distant in summer than in winter. Solar eclipses: explanation of their causes. The manner in which a due supply of solar light and heat is secured to the earth. To be illustrated by Telescopic Drawings and Diorama of the Solar system.

There then followed: The Moon; the Planets; the Comets; the Present Comet;[26] and the Fixed Star. Says Ludlow, "His lectures were well attended, for the time, and I think he cleared some money during his stay in St. Louis." His diary yields up a few more details. "Recpts first night. For the whole Series $197.50. For the night—120.75. Recpts. of the night taking average of the series $153.33. Our share $101.67." This on June 12. Later he paid Lardner an additional $51.67.

During the month which followed Ludlow was out of town, having gone down to New Orleans to negotiate with Caldwell the lease of his theatre in Mobile, and to see his wife and children in the latter city. On his return in mid-July with the lease, which by giving the firm the control of three theatres greatly strengthened its position, Smith set out for the East to make engagements for the fall and winter.

[26]"The Great Comet of 1843," observed February 28 to April 19.

Meanwhile the St. Louis stage was unprofitably occupied, for the most part by a youthful danseuse named Emma Ince, who disported herself to little purpose in *La Bayadere* and other ballets, and nearly got herself killed by being thrown from a horse while on a jaunt in the country. She hailed from Philadelphia, and would not be fifteen until next month. The terms of her contract as set down in the Letter Book (June 26, 1843) were: "Miss Ince to dance 14 nights in all commencing on the 5th of July (next month) unless prevented by some accident from arriving in time—for the sum of *One Hundred and Eighty Dollars*—the Management to have the use of her name for such Benefits (within the time named) as they shall choose to announce." Ludlow calls her "a pretty American girl, but not sufficiently clever in her profession to draw full houses. Her benefit was not good."

On the evening of the eighteenth arrived the next star, a very different one from the little dancer, who had almost finished her stint. "Mrs. Brougham," wrote Ludlow in his diary on that evening, "arrived from Cincinnati to play here—came at night with Captain Beard: Handsome woman Pretty appearance." Despite the ambiguity of Ludlow's phrase, no scandal need be scented. Beard was the captain of the steamboat *Valley Forge,* and so far as I know, a perfectly respectable man. The next evening, the manager wrote: "Saw Mrs. Brougham at 9 a.m. Understood that she plays on Friday next Eight nights share after $125 & Half Ben on the 9th night." So in "the Palmy Days" was theatrical business transacted.

This lady was the first wife of the famous comedian, manager, and playwright, John Brougham. (Allston Brown errs in stating that she was the second.) She had been a Miss Emma Williams, and had quite a reputation as a beauty. Ludlow is ungallant (and probably truthful) enough to remark that she had "a moderate share of talent and a considerable share of temper."[27] He seems not to have shared the enthusiasm of the *Spirit of the Times,* which said, apropos of her debut with her husband at the Park in 1842, that "She is a lady of extraordinary personal attractions, and even if she were an actress of but ordinary abilities, her rare beauty alone would attract troops of admirers."[28] The St. Louisans of 1843 must have been blind to

[27]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 584.
[28]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 608.

feminine beauty, for, unless Ludlow's memory is playing him tricks again, there was no troop of admirers, but only $77.25 in the house on July 21, when she made her bow as Lady Teazle. Perhaps the "beggarly array of empty seats" explains her temper. The *Republican* tried to help beauty in distress by giving space to an enticing editorial. "We have seldom seen the character of Lady Teazle, in the good old comedy of School for Scandal, more ably sustained than it was on Friday evening. Mrs. B. has a chaste, winning style, and identifies herself with the character she personates. The illusion is never broken by straining after effect. If this talented lady fails to fill the theatre, the manager may despair." I don't know whether Ludlow despaired or not—it is not unthinkable that he was himself the author of this puff—but he set down his own appraisal of her artistic merits. "She is a pleasing actress, yet not great—but being a pretty woman will always be a favorite."[29]

In this evaluation he was probably correct enough, but he was not correct when he wrote in his memoirs that the Seguins opened their engagement on the 24th, at least implying that the beauty had departed. On the contrary, she remained to the end of the month, though she did surrender one evening to her successors (in return for which they "volunteered" for her benefit). After the Sheridan comedy she was seen in *The Honey Moon, The Hunchback, The Love Chase* (twice), and *London Assurance* (twice). Apropos of the latter, Ludlow observed in his diary that she had "attempted Lady Gay Spanker but could not do it justice." What part she essayed for her benefit is not revealed. As a box office lure she was a distinct disappointment, the largest sum she attracted being $90.00 for *The Hunchback,* the lowest $39.75 for the repetition of *London Assurance.* Her benefit drew only $111.25.

On June 15 Ludlow had written W. H. Chippendale, who acted as one of the firm's Eastern agents, giving him authority to engage the operatic troupe of the Seguins, the terms to be "¼ Recpts for nine nights & 3 half Bens & $20 a week for Mr. Archer."[30] Whether Chippendale failed to establish contact with them or they did not like what he had to offer is not clear, but, when they reached St. Louis on July 22, there obviously had been no agreement because

[29]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, July 21, 1843.
[30]*Ibid.,* June 15, 1843.

Ludlow wrote in his diary that he had heard they intended to give concerts. "We shall see." The next day a conference with Mr. and Mrs. Seguin and Mr. Shrival, the tenor, was unproductive of results, but on the twenty-fourth common ground was established, and, after all the discussion, on the original terms, the only difference being that the engagement was extended a day. During a great part of this engagement Ludlow was ill with influenza, or, as it was called at the time, "Tyler grippe"; yet he managed to carry on.

Arthur Edward Sheldon Seguin was an English basso of considerable experience at home who came to this country in 1838 with his wife, the former Anne Childe, and soon established himself as one of the ablest operatic artists in the field; Mrs. Seguin, who also had made a name for herself before crossing the Atlantic, soon gained recognition as a prima donna of exceptional competence. After their initial appearance in the East, they organized a small, compact troupe, and toured the country, filling engagements with the various stock companies, which, as in St. Louis, provided the singers for the minor roles, choruses, and orchestras.

Not forgetting his error in the matter of the date, I turn again to Ludlow.

July 24th, the Seguin Opera Troupe, highly popular in that day, commenced an engagement for a certain number of nights with "La Sonnambula;" receipts only $159.50. This company, although limited, was good; and what they undertook was given in a very clever and artistic manner, and at any other time would have drawn houses that would have put money into their and the managers' pockets; but as it was, both parties lost money. Paid Seguin for six night $356.50, Ludlow & Smith getting for the same number of nights $26 over the actual expenses.

Seventh night, the "Postillion of Longjumeau," for the benefit of Mr. Shrival. Tenth night, Mrs. Seguin's benefit, "La Gazza Ladra" and "Olympic Revels." Paid Seguin for the last six nights $445.60, and Mr. Thomas Archer's salary, $20 more. Out of this engagement of two weeks, Ludlow & Smith did not get their actual expenses. On the 12th of August, benefit of the managers being put up, the Seguins volunteered. . . .[31]

In his diary he wrote after the opening performance ". . . very few ladies. So much for the people of St. Louis who have been at us for

[31]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 577.

two years to bring an opera company here." But, even so, there was some compensation. On the previous evening, before he knew the worst, he had entered this moving item in his journal: "Had a pretty good rehearsal of the music of *La Sonnambula.* Oh! how beautiful is the music of this piece—I can never hear it without shedding tears—there is a mysterious cord in almost every strain that thrills to my very heart & soul *Great Bellini!* I wish I could have known you personally I think there is a strange affinity in the quality of feeling with which you were and I am possessed." The opera had in all three rehearsals.

To the *St. Louis New Era,* an evening paper, as well as to the invaluable diary, we are indebted for information concerning the repertoire. In addition to those already mentioned, the following works were given: *Cinderella* (whether the original or the perversion, there is no way of telling), *The Marriage of Figaro,* and *The Barber of Seville.* Both papers, the *New Era* and the *Republican,* bespeak public support, but the former goes further and reports that it was forthcoming, a fact which Ludlow disputes. "A well-filled and fashionable house witnessed the performance of an excellent Opera [*The Barber*], in an excellent manner, last night, at the theatre. It was a treat seldom offered; and the managers and the actors should, while they are in this humor, be encouraged."[32] On the sixth the same journal said that on the previous evening *The Postillion* was "witnessed" by a fine, though not crowded house. Declaring that the same opera was to be repeated that evening, the writer—Ludlow (?) —urged his readers to attend. On the tenth again it reported that for Mrs. Seguin's benefit (*La Gazza Ladra* and *Olympic Revels*) "The Box book was opened yesterday, and we learn that all the boxes in the first tier were taken in the fore part of the day. This gives assurance of a full house." In his diary on the same day Ludlow wrote, "Great rush for seats for Mrs. Seguin's Benefit tonight."

One statement in the press, in this instance the *Republican,* is definitely incorrect. The writer states that this " is the first effort to introduce Opera here." St. Louis had heard opera before, even if the hybrid *Cinderella* is not counted, for in 1838 *La Sonnambula*

[32] *New Era,* August 4, 1843.

had been sung twice with the English soprano, Mrs. Gibbs, as Amina.[83]

After their season at the Theatre, the singers tried to pick up a few odd dollars and cents by means of a concert at the Planters House. Ludlow took his son Dick, and shook his head over the outcome. "I should suppose recpts about $60 or 70. License $25—Room $15."[84]

"After the Seguins left," says Ludlow, "having very little attraction to offer the public, save what might be in our stock company, and that did not seem to draw, I gave three or four benefits and closed the spring season."[85] He did nothing of the sort. The notice in the *Republican* of August 12 refers to the managerial benefit, in which the Seguins participated, as the *last night* of the statement, and in his diary Ludlow lists no more performances. This raises the question as to how he could make such flagrant errors when he had his diary before him as he wrote. He apologizes for omitting the details of his activities during October, on the ground that he had misplaced his diary for that month.[86] (It is still missing.) Presumably then he did have the others. The record of each month for many years is contained in his own little notebook. It is to be regretted that he failed to follow them more closely when writing his book. At all events, the spring season came to an end on August 12.

After a hiatus of about three weeks, the Theatre reopened on September 2, according to Ludlow on the "hottest night of the season," with *The Wandering Boys* and the farce of *Alive and Merry*. In this case he hits the nail on the head. He then outlines the fall season on the whole correctly, but, while he mentions the various stars who trod his boards for better or for worse, he fails to identify the regular members of the company. Fortunately the *New Era*, even though the editor was by his own assertion no playgoer, comes to our aid with an almost complete set of advertisements. The managers seem to have executed a complete about-face. During the spring season, so far at least as I have been able to determine, they had eschewed advertisements altogether. Now they went to the other extreme—in the *New Era*—with paid notices which go to the

[83]Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier*, 249.
[84]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, August 14, 1843.
[85]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 578.
[86]*Ibid.*, 579.

length of naming all but the most unimportant members of the *dramatis personae*. Why not in the *Republican*? Possibly because it was a morning paper, whereas the *New Era* came out in the evening. At all events, the management of the older paper obviously took no offence, since it published more theatrical items in the fall than it had in the spring. Probably its printing-office had the contract for providing the programs and playbills.

These advertisements make it possible to compile a rather full list of the significant members of the corps. The Fariens, Neafie, Caroline Chapman and her nephew, Maynard, and Mrs. Russell were still on hand. On August 31 the *Republican*, apropos of the imminent opening, observed: "We notice that the managers have engaged Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field, Mr. Silsbee, H. Russell, W. H. Brown, H. Davis, T. Placide, G. Holland, and La Petite Carline. They will appear at intervals during the season." Ludlow says that Smith while on his trip East also engaged Forrest, Henry Placide, and Mr. and Mrs. Brougham as " 'stars' for our three theatres; and also engaged some performers as 'stock actors.' "[87] As will be seen, not all of these reached St. Louis at this time.

After a sort of Saturday evening prologue consisting of *The Wandering Boys* and *Alive and Merry*, the fall season really got under way on Monday, September 4, with the first stars, and very feeble ones at that. These were the pantomimists Russell, Davis, and Brown, and "la Petite Carline" (frequently misspelled "Carliene" and "Carleine") evidently, like the unregretted Emma Ince, a juvenile emulator of Fanny Elssler. The card in the *Republican* of September 16 which announces her benefit says: "She is a mere child, apparently about 9 or 10 years of age, and her grace and precision is astonishing. Her strength of limb and body enables her to dance with all the ease of a practised adult." This quartet opened in an elaborate program made up of *A Husband at Sight*, a *cachuca* danced by the prodigy, and a comic pantomime, "first time here," called *Harlequin* or *The Fairy in the Wheat Sheaf*, in which last, in addition to the three men named above, Carline and Miss Chapman took part. There is really no necessity of lingering long with all this small fry. They themselves did linger on through the sixteenth,

[87] *Ibid.*, 578.

presenting various pantomimes (of which, one called *The Night Owl* was done four times) and "favorite dances." In order to give some savor to these untempting bills, the managers added some standard comedies and farces. In these, of course, the regular members of the company were employed. But nothing sufficed. "Our entire receipts for the week of the pantomimists was only $418.25. Miserable business; nothing seemed to draw." Ludlow forgot that they stayed two weeks. Before they had finished and they themselves were finished, the managers called for help, seeking it in a restaurant.

Said the *Republican* on September 15: "On Wednesday evening Sept. 13 the sterling comedy of 'The Dramatist,' introduced upon the boards of our theatre that excellent actor GEORGE BARRETT, after an absence of a year from the profession. His return was hailed with enthusiasm by his friends, and he stepped the boards as if he felt he had returned *home*. . . . On this occasion, his Vapid drew forth merited peals of applause. His short respite from the profession appears to have recruited his powers, and he now steps upon the stage refreshed with the determination of showing his old friends a finished representation of character in those old sterling comedies which modern taste appears to have laid almost aside. . . ."

Gentleman George was not yet fifty, but a century ago that age was often regarded as practically the threshold to Shakespeare's seventh age of man. Despite his advancing years, he made a successful comeback and remained active in his profession for approximately a decade. On this occasion he contracted "to play for 6 or 9 nights Ben ½ if it amounts to $400—or share after $100."[88] He was seen as Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem,* O'Callaghan in *His Last Legs* (for la Petite Carline's benefit), Ambrose in *The Two Friends* (for Sol's benefit), Goldfinch in *The Road to Ruin,* and Sir Peter Teazle (for his own benefit on the twentieth). These add up to only five. He was also to have been presented as Gossamer in *Laugh When You Can,* but was too hoarse to be heard, and was replaced by Ludlow. On the nineteenth he shared the program with an unidentified "Mr. Reeves," whom I take to have been the Irish actor John Reeves, who, according to Brown, had made his debut in Philadelphia the year before as Dr. O'Toole in *The Irish Tutor,* and

[88]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, September 12, 1843.

who was accidentally killed in Cincinnati.[39] The much more important John Reeve was by 1843 already dead, and W. H. Reeves had not yet come to this country. Whoever he was, he proved to be no magnet, since the intake added up to only $55.25.[40]

Barrett too was quite ineffective as a pulmotor. Before his return, the receipts of the pantomimists' engagement had averaged $69.50 a night, as we learn from Ludlow's diary; now they dropped even lower. (I cannot estimate the average because there is no record for one evening.) Of course, on benefit nights they tended to rise, but, at that, Gentleman George, if he peeked through the hole in the curtain on his night, can have counted only $154.75 in the house. Two nights before, Smith had done better, reaching the sum of $215.50. Ludlow was patently "tickled" that his partner had fared no better than that. "There is," he wrote in his diary on the eighteenth, "to be a Bible and Shakespear presented to Sol Smith tonight on the Stage for his address to Doctor Beecher—bought by subscription obtained among the citizens—No go! It was not done; money couldn't be raised 'I guess.' Performance Sol Smith Ben $215.50 himself & friend P. M. Johnston to raise a big house—no go!"

I cannot think that Barrett's visit to his old surroundings, not taking into accounts its financial failure, can have been very enjoyable. This was one of those periods when the relations between the two partners were more strained than usual. Ludlow's diary for these weeks is full of bitter complaints, the reasons for which he does not always make clear. I think the basic one was that he owed Smith money and that the latter was insisting on payment. As early as August 31 he had commented sourly on an article in a recent issue of the New Orleans *Picayune* which expressed wonder that Smith had abandoned the profession of journalism. "I think its a pity he ever did. He may have made a tolerable Editor in time—He never was—never can be an actor: he hasnt genious enough to form an actor—As far as low cunning can go he will be successful." Entries throughout September record quarrels, one over Smith's purchase of $350 worth of costumes from the Tremont Theatre (Boston) and the manner in which he expects to be reimbursed—"He's a dam'd mean

[39]Brown: *American Stage.*

[40]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, September 19, 1843.

man & no mistake!"—and another over the employment of a boy named Edwin who had some unexplained connection with Ludlow, as office boy at the St. Charles. This on September 17.

Sept. 17. Another talk or quarrel with Sol Smith . . . showed some more of his meaness of which I will make a full record. . . . Mem. Sol Smith said in our conversation Sunday 17th that he would never advance another dollar for the concern—I said I hoped he never would unless he was content to take it of the first receipts of the theatre—or at least the first *good* business. . . . Recd. from Sol Smith proposals for dissolution of partnership at the end of the Spring & Winter Season.

Smith's diary yields no information concerning his side of these particular quarrels, but there are many bitter entries in 1841 and 1842. Most of these, like most of Ludlow's, I have seen no particular reason to include in this book, but one under date of November 12, 1841, does seem to have some bearing on the present tension which must have complicated the operation of the St. Louis season, and I shall insert at least a part of it.

Memorandum

When I sold out the Mercantile Advertiser office, Mobile, I recd. in part payment a note drawn by Broadnax & Newton, for $5,000, endorsed by C. C. Langdon & J. O Harris. Newton was dead, but Broadnax was then Director of the State Bank of Alabama, (Branch) & was good for the amount. Had the note been deposited in said Branch for collection, it would have been *paid at maturity* beyond a doubt, as Broadnax could not have sat as Director while under Protest. But the Emanuel Street Theatre burning down that fall, (1838) the firm of L. & S. became somewhat embarrassed & there was a difficulty in obtaining a renewal of a certain note in the Bank of Mobile for the previous year's rent. Collateral security was required by the bank, & I immediately offered to endorse $5,000 note to the firm, & let it be used as security. The result is that I not only *lose the amount of the note,* but *I lose two houses* & a *lot which cost me* $11,000!! The proceeds of that note being the only means I had to take up a mortgage for a trifle over $3,000.

The comfort of it all is, that when, after the note laying in the Bank nearly 3 years, entirely out of my power to make any use of whatever, (during which time the surviving drawer *put everything* out of his hands, I mentioned the fact to my partner, Mr. Ludlow—not expecting or asking to be remunerated for the heavy damage I had sustained—*he laughed at me,* saying *it was my own offer!*

The 1st of Oct. 1842, is not quite a year off—and if I continue a connection with N. M. Ludlow *after* that date, it will *be my own fault.*

I have not got even a memorandum of the fact that the abovementioned note *is mine*—& if I should die, it would appear to belong to the firm, *the firm being the last Endorsers!*

I may have been a *fool* for many years. I intend to throw off my folly if possible, and so far as I can do so *honestly* take care of myself & family for the future.

While I have been impoverishing myself by bad speculations & attempts to save the credit of the firm, my prudent partner has enriched himself, & placed all his property in the hands of his daughters so that if an execution should issue against Ludlow & Smith *none of his property could be touched.*

And so the season festered on. On the twentieth Barrett had his benefit, for which he delayed his departure for New Orleans in order to participate. The two pieces of the evening were *The School for Scandal* and *John Jones of the War Office*, in the first of which Sol played Crabtree, in the second, Guy Goodluck. Gentleman George was the Sir Peter of the evening vis-à-vis Mrs. Farren. Ludlow as usual was Charles with Neafie as Joseph, Farren as Sir Oliver, Maynard as Sir Benjamin, Caroline Chapman as Mrs. Candour, and Mrs. Eddy as Maria. I doubt if the company did anything better than this good old comedy. With it out of the way, both the star and the junior partner soon betook themselves to other scenes, and probably life in the Theatre was more serene.

Early in the summer Smith had received a letter which had probably provoked a smile, perhaps a bit rueful, perhaps hopeful. At least it has its points. The author was one Josh Silsbee.

Buffalo, June 26th '43

Gent.

I have Jest arrived in this city from the East, where I made the greatest *hit* in the Yankee business in Boston, Phila, N. Y. *Tremont—Walnut & Chatham* Theatres—So the Managers & the public thought that ever was made there—I played several Engts at each Theatre at 20, 25, & 30 per cent nightly & ½ Benft I shall play a few nights here with Rice & then should like to come to St. Louis—I have a good set of new Yankee pieces—and should no doubt be a strong card for you—I have a better set of pieces than *Marble*—besides they are generally new—You may think I

am boasting—but I can bring letters from—Joe Jones—Thorne—Charlotte Cushman & others if necessary that they consider me No 1 Easy—I play with Hill, as I have all the bill etc. yet in Boston—on the same nights for 4 nights & Hill withdrew & I was engaged. . . .

To which Smith responded, Ludlow being out of town:

St. Louis, July 6, 1843

Dr. Sir

Yours of the 26th inst. is received—You are perfectly correct in supposing that we may think you are a little given to "boasting"—But never mind—business is business. We are willing to give the people a *change*, and therefore will receive you on the following terms—Divide after $200, Stock nights, and benefit—divide after $50. If you are considered *here* better than Marble, (as you say you have been elsewhere) you will do well. As to time, if you come by the Lakes, we will endeavour to make an opening for you on your arrival—if not *immediately*, *Soon as possible* 6 nights and *Benefit*—new pieces as many as possible . .

This modest violet seems to have taken his time in replying, because the only other letter under his hand of which there remains a trace is a brief epistle dated September 4 in which he announces that he will be in St. Louis "on or about 20" ready to go ahead on the terms offered, and also quite receptive in the manner of a re-engagement. He concludes with the surprising news that he is playing Yankee engagements with his wife and, of all people, Dan Marble! Inasmuch as he had a fondness for some of the latter's favorite pieces, said latter must have been a good-natured man off the stage as well as on.

The last letter does not harmonize too well with Ludlow's version of the course of events.[42] "Mr. Dan Marble and Mr. Silsbee, both representatives of Yankee characters, arrived in the city about the same time; both came unexpectedly, and both wished to perform in our theatre. All we could do was to give them alternate nights. The style of representing the genus 'Yankee' was quite different with these two gentlemen, and it was very amusing to note this difference."

On another page Ludlow quotes from *Tallis's Magazine* comments upon the peculiarities of the Silsbeean art as manifested in London

[42]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 579.

in 1850. "His style of acting differs considerably from either Hill's or Marble's, and is indeed so far peculiar that it may be said to form a new and original school. Faithfully as he performs the Yankee character, his performances are permeated with the natural humor of the man. His looks, gestures, and actions, even the arch twinkle of his eye, impress the spectator with ludicrous emotions, and his inflexible countenance, rigidly innocent of fun while his audience are in roars of laughters, gives an additional zest to the humor of the language and the absurdity of the situation.[42]

Josh Silsbee came by his Yankeeism legitimately, since he was a native of Connecticut, though, oddly enough, he made his debut on the stage at Natchez, in the Deep South. His particular flair was discovered by accident three years before his St. Louis visit when at Cincinnati he volunteered a Yankee story at a benefit of James M. Scott. Since then he had met with success, success which was to grow, both in this country and abroad, until his career was cut short by his sudden death, according to Ireland, in 1855. In 1843, if Ludlow is right—and he leans heavily on Ireland—he was about thirty; if Brown is right, two years younger.[43]

There is something baffling about this joint engagement. The two men came on the same boat and, as we know from Silsbee's letter, had teamed up; yet, even so, they took chances with each other, blithely exchanging roles as they did. Perhaps it would all seem less strange if the younger man had not so brashly asserted his superiority. The newcomer got in the first shot, appearing as Lot Sap Sago in Cornelius Logan's *Yankee Land*, which he brazenly claimed had been written "originally and expressly for him."[44] How can he have hoped to get by with such an assertion? How can Marble have stomached it? Dr. Quinn says that Hackett played Lot Sap Sago at the Park in 1834, four years before Silsbee set foot on the stage.[45] Of Hackett's performance Dr. Odell makes no mention, but he refers to *Yankee Land* as Marble's property. Apropos of Silsbee's appropriations, he says: "I must say I do not know under what legal right

[42]*Ibid*, 588.
[43]Brown: *American Stage*.
[44]*New Era*, September 21, 1843.
[45]Quinn: *American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War*, 301.

Silsbee could thus take Marble's plays to his own use."[46] That was in June, 1843; and Marble was at the Park, and his rival at the Chatham. In St. Louis they were in the same theatre, and the purloining, if purloining it was, was done right under Dan's nose.

With Silsbee in the cast were Neafie as Lieutenant Ostrand, Maynard as Harvey Ashton, Farren as Senil, and Mrs. Farren as Josephine. The Farrens and Neafie were involved also in the afterpiece, *The Youthful Queen.* The next evening, Marble took over as Jonathan in *The Forest Rose* and William in *Black Eyed Susan.* A special guest of the evening was Marshal Henri Gratien Bertrand, one of Napoleon's generals. Ludlow asserts that during the course of the performance, no doubt of *The Forest Rose,* the guest of honor observed to someone that "the character represented by Mr. Marble was, as he supposed, a class of Americans he had yet to meet with." The Frenchman's visit was profitable to the house since there was no less than $314.25 in the cash box.[47] "The curiosity of our American people," ruminates the manager in his book, "is very great! They will go to the theatre to see a live marshal, when they will not go to see a good performance."[48]

It will be recalled that Silsbee had promised to bring new pieces in his baggage. In that category he can scarcely have hoped to include *Yankee Land.* But in it did fit a comedy (or, perhaps, it was a farce) called *Redwood* or *Connecticut Curiosities,* which Ludlow declares to have been founded on a novel, and Dr. Quinn assigns to J. Addams.[49] "Silsbee and Marble both appeared this night, but they could not make it a success," observes Ludlow. This sentence is misleading if the *it* was intended to refer to *Redwood*; more probably it referred to the program as a whole. Marble made his contribution as Deuteronomy Dutiful in *The Wool Dealer* (also known as *The Vermonter*), a character St. Louisans had seen him interpret before. As a matter of record, since this was a "first time in St. Louis," the cast of *Redwood* included: Silsbee as Josh Doolittle,

[46]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 646.

[47]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, September 22, 1843.

[48]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 579.

[49]Quinn: *American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War,* 451. The novel probably was *Redwood, Tale of New England in the Early Days,* by Katherine Maria Sedgwick, 1824.

Lake as Old Doolittle, Farren as Colonel Morse, Neafie as Mr. Redwood, Maynard as Clarkson, Mrs. Farren as Ellen Morse, Mrs. Eddy as Caroline Redwood, Caroline Chapman as Mahitable Dodge, and Mrs. Russell as Mrs. Doolittle. Ludlow noted in his diary that the play ran two hours, to one for *The Wool Dealer*, and that the income was $178.25.

September 26 saw a revival of Noah's *The Plains of Chippewa* or *She Would Be a Soldier* (first played in St. Louis in 1821) with Marble as Jerry Mayflower. This was followed by a new farce, *Speculation* or *The March of Intellect*—a very imposing title—with Silsbee as Freeze-Up-Wrinkle.

The visit of the two comedians was concluded with a repetition of *Redwood* plus *The Yankee in Time* with Marble as Jacob Jewsharp, and the two benefits, in which each visitor lent a helping hand to the other. For his, Silsbee offered some of his vaunted novelties: *Bumps* or *The Magnetized Yankee*, playing Old Hartshorn himself; *The Boston Tea Party* or *Yankees in 1773*, playing Jacob Fellar; and *The Yankee at Niagara*, playing Hector Grizzle. He also treated his hearers to "Yankee stories without number." In the midst of all this farrago of nonsense, Marble did his bit as Lot Sap Sago. The senior comedian did not have such an array of new pieces to offer on his night, but he did stray once more from his beaten path to show what he could do with Diggory in *All the World's a Stage* and again as William in *Black Eyed Susan*, as well as the more usual Uzziel Putnam in *The Times that Tried Us*. Silsbee "obliged" with his version of Deuteronomy, providing another opportunity for comparison. This dramatic olio marked the conclusion of another disappointing engagement. On the last day of the Month Ludlow entered in his diary: "Settled with Marble his Engt. yielding him $276.75." I have no further figures, not even the terms of this particular engagement. I wonder how Silsbee's ego stood up under it; probably it was proof against such buffets of neglect. (Incidentally, it was not St. Louis alone that failed to do homage to genius. Ludlow says that Silsbee's Mobile visit the following January was also a failure, "he having in no instance the expenses of the night in the theatre. . . ."[50]

[50]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 587.

Until October 6, when the next star was due, the management marked time, taking advantage of the lull to dispose of several necessary benefits, the performances, except in one case, being devoted to numbers of the tried-and-true variety. The exception was *The Carpenter of Rouen* or *The Confrerie,* a new melodrama. In this the role of Marteau was entrusted to Neafie, Mary Ann Farren being the Madelon. In the cast too were Eddy as de Saubigne, Maynard as Antoine, Harry Chapman as Nykin da Nippe, Farren as Grondu, and Miss Chapman as Julie. The saddest of the benefits was young Chapman's, on September 30: "H. Chapman's Benefit. Cold & windy—Recpts. $10+.00 share after 100." Poor Harry! $2.00. The exclamation point is mine. Ludlow was in no frame of mind to shed tears of pity for others on the pages of his diary.

The Carpenter was presented for the benefit of the Firemen's Fund Association, an annual good will gesture on the part of the management which this time had a more humorous slant than usual. Ever since the first of June the managers had been bedevilled by the presence in town of one Otto Motty, a German strong man and an erstwhile member of their recent equestrian corps who had made serious trouble for Smith during the abortive expedition to Havana. Ludlow says that he "arrived in St. Louis, put up a large canvas tent, and gave the public 'chariot-racing,' what he termed 'Olympic games.'"[51] "But," he continues, "trying it out for a few nights, and finding it did not pay, the fellow had the impudence to ask me to engage him. . . I quietly invited him, in a very marked and suggestive manner, to depart at once through the door he had come in at; and he did so." Thus in his memoirs, but the account in his diary (June 10) is less dramatic. "*Otto Motty* applied through Walker for an engagement." But maybe he came in person later I should like to have seen the slender Ludlow confronting the German Hercules. But Herr Motty was too strong a man to be downed and he lingered on in St. Louis throughout the summer, giving various sorts of exhibitions, outdoors and in, sometimes assisted by his three little daughters who, on August 12, were hailed by the gracious *Republican* as paragons "who bid fair to outrival the famous Ellsler." During the hot summer weeks, the husky Teuton

[51] *Ibid.,* 575.

was in and out of the papers, especially the *Republican*, which gave him more space than it did the Theatre. I suspect that his feats (of "activity" and otherwise) must have sorely tried the harassed managers because every St. Louisan who went to the Concert Hall or the Olympic Circus on Second Street to revel in the delights afforded by the Motty family definitely did not come to the Theatre on Third Street. The laws of physics forbade. Then to add insult to injury, on September 27 he deliberately stole a march on them by giving a benefit for the Firemen's Fund. No wonder they hurried to repair damages and with a lurid melodrama at that! Nor can Messrs. Ludlow and Smith, whatever their feelings toward each other, have looked with other than jaundiced eyes at the Planters House, where John Sinclair settled down early in August to give concert after concert. There went more cash into the wrong till.

October 6 saw the advent of the next star, Mrs. W. H. Smith. This lady had associations with both managers which easily antedated those of anyone else now connected with their establishment. As Sarah Riddle, she with her mother (as well as Edwin Forrest) had been in 1823 a member of the first theatrical company that Smith ever managed, a decidedly modest little corps which endeavored, futilely as it turned out, to get red blood out of a white turnip in Cincinnati.[52] The next year found the Riddles in Nashville under the aegis of another tyro manager, Noah M. Ludlow.[53] Since those early days, Mrs. Riddle had disappeared from the dramatic scene, and her two daughters had achieved an honorable status on the stage. Sarah, now Mrs. Smith, had made a name for herself by her skill and charm in soubrette and "Abigail" roles, which she had, of course, by this time outgrown, but which she was reluctant to relinquish. The younger sister, Eliza, now Mrs. J. M. Field, was, after years as leading lady for Ludlow and Smith, a star. Despite the fact that in his book Ludlow states that Mrs. Smith was a member of the St. Louis company in 1840, there is no contemporary evidence to corroborate his assertion; furthermore, the advertisement in the *New Era* (October 6) refers specifically to her *"First appearance in this city."*

[52]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 29.
[53]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 256.

The card identifies her as "MRS. W. H. SMITH, lately of the Tremont Theatre, Boston, who is engaged for a few nights." She was from Boston—indeed, most of her long career was identified with that city—but she stayed more than "a few nights." In fact, she stayed till the end of the season on October 30, though not to the end in the position of star. Her debut was accomplished as the Widow Cheerly in the long-lived old comedy of *The Soldier's Daughter*, adding to this role that of Nancy Strap to the Sir George Howard of Eddy in *The Pleasant Neighbor*.

There then followed a procession of the "good old comedies" and farces with Mrs. Smith assuming such roles as Julia in *The Welsh Girl*, Cicely in *The Promissory Note*, Helen Worrett in *Man and Wife*, Miss Hardcastle (with Farren as her father, Mrs. Russell as her mother, and Ludlow as her evasive lover), Estelle in *Crossing the Line*, the Duchess of Torrenueva in *Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady*, and the Widow White in *Mrs. White* or *Which is the Lady?* (*Mr. and Mrs. Peter White* by another name). Then on the twelfth came the Broughams, and this little star was outshone by two brighter ones.

This was in the autumn of 1843. Writing thirty-three years later, Laurence Hutton said of John Brougham: "He is personally, and in his profession, undoubtedly the most popular man on the American stage to-day, a popularity he achieved on his first appearance, and which he has steadily maintained during the thirty or more years of his residence among us."[54] Dr. Odell calls him "one of the most popular stage performers known in New York, a wit, a writer, a citizen (at least in spirit) almost unmatched in genial scope and sway. The world," he goes on, "was waiting for John Brougham when he appeared; and richly did he reward in fun and frolic, often irrelevant but irresistible."[55]

At this time he had been in the United States almost exactly a year, his New York debut having occurred on October 4, 1842, and he had only just initiated his long participation in American life, but already he was well in character. "Whatever line of part attacked by John Brougham," continues Dr. Odell, "one grew to

[54]Hutton: *Plays and Players*, 50
[55]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 608.

associate him with Irish character; indeed it is doubtful if a rich brogue was not indigenous to his speech." By many he seems to have been expected to step into the shoes left empty by the loss of Tyrone Power, but, says Dr. Odell, "Too often John Brougham was but John Brougham under another name in the play; Power's Irishmen were varied and completely differentiated, one from another."

True to his type, Brougham during his stay in St. Louis emphasized Irish character parts. The first was Sir Patrick O'Plenipo in *The Irish Ambassador* (a role formerly played here only by Joseph Burke, the youthful prodigy) and Tom Moore in *The Irish Lion*. His wife also participated in both pieces, as Isabella in the first, and Mrs. Fitzgig in the second. Unfortunately, despite the undoubted excellence of Brougham's performances, neither paper took enough interest to comment upon them except for a rather perfunctory notice of his wife's benefit in the *Republican* of October 17, and a good one in the *New Era* of the sixteenth. Smith, as I have said, to all intents and purposes ignores the fall season, and Ludlow, having lost his diary, could recall nothing about the events of October. "I do not remember our having any 'stars' of consequence during October; and our fall season in St. Louis closed with that month, leaving us minus several hundreds of dollars." Yet in the next paragraph he does recall the fact that the Broughams and Mrs. Smith had borne him company down the river. Where did he think they had been? In the absence of other sources of information, then, I must depend entirely on the advertisements in the *New Era* with the result that my narrative will, I fear, resemble nothing so much as a famous catalogue.

October 13 was marked by a revival of *The Hunchback,* which, naturally, afforded Mrs. Brougham an opportunity to display her beauty in one of the most highly prized roles in modern drama. Mrs. Smith filled the secondary part of Helen while the usual Julia, Mary Ann Farren, enjoyed a brief respite. After the reconciliation of Julia and Clifford, on this occasion Neafie, Brougham went on as O'Callaghan in *His Last Legs,* the role of his debut at the Park. On the fourteenth the personnel was rather belatedly strengthened by the arrival of Tom Placide, who turned up as Peter Spyk in *The Loan of a Lover,* Farren helping with Swyzel and Mrs. Smith with

Gertrude. He followed this with Mr. Timid in *The Dead Shot* to Mrs. Brougham's Mrs. Lovetrick, and Tom Dobbs in *The Omnibus* to the Pat Rooney of Brougham. Having come late, he allowed no grass to grow under his feet.

For her benefit on the sixteenth Mrs. Smith chose *The Rivals,* which, incidentally, was not given here as often as was *The School for Scandal.* I think the good lady was a little mature for Lydia Languish, but she apparently did not think so, and maybe her audience agreed with her. Sir Lucius, of course, was Brougham's meat, while Farren did Sir Anthony, Neafie was his son, Placide was Bob Acres, and Mrs. Brougham hid her beauty in the make-up of Mrs. Malaprop. Fag was taken by a Mr. Russell, presumably the late pantommist, since his initial is given as *H.* a few days later. Mrs. Brougham, by the way, was careful to have inserted in the publicity a statement to the effect that she had *volunteered* to play "this eccentric character." After the comedy, the Broughams disported themselves in *The Married Rake.*

The same evening saw the only really good publicity the latter netted during their stay in the city. For it, they were indebted to someone who signed himself "Q. E. D."

> Mrs. Brougham, all life, spirit and vivacity—with a pleasing exterior, possessed of manners entirely removed from the forwardness usually observed in theatrical performers [How delighted her confréres must have been with this little tribute!]—an educated lady—wins for herself alike our tribute of applause and esteem. Mr. Brougham as much of an Irishman (in his personation of character) as though the green isle had been his birthplace [it had]; refined in his tastes, a gentleman in every sense of the word, *un citoyen du monde,* and a scholar in equal degree with his accomplished lady, deserves our admiration. . . .
>
> Q. E. D. deserved at the very least a complimentary ticket. (And I have given but a sample of his panegyric.)

We are now in what was announced as the last week of the season, and the plays continued in a light vein—*The Irish Ambassador* (repeated by "request"), *The Irish Tutor, The Irish Lion, Our Irish Friend, The Nervous Man, Teddy the Tiler,* and *Born to Good Luck* or *The Irishman's Fortune.* (Surely the Theatre must have been treated to a coat of green paint.) Three other plays of a

different calibre—calibres, I should say—gave this week slightly greater weight. Of these, by far the most important was *As You Like It,* which Mrs. Brougham selected for her benefit. This Shakespearean comedy had not been seen in St. Louis since the hilarious performance in 1839 when the actor cast as Duke Frederick, unfamiliar with the text, departed from the stage and also from his costume and make-up before his last scene, and Sol *in propria persona* had to come before the curtain and banish Rosalind by managerial fiat. ("I thought Miss Tree would burst her corsetts," he wrote Ludlow.)[56] By a strange coincidence the first Rosalind to be banished (more formally than Ellen Tree) from the St. Louis stage was none other than Annette Nelson, who after an interlude as Mrs. Hodges, was very soon to oust the present lady-star from her bed and board, and take her place as Mrs. Brougham the Second. On this particular evening in the fall of 1843, unaware of this concatenation of circumstances, the bearer of the title assembled about her the following cast: Jacques, Neafie; Orlando, Maynard; Duke (which one?), Eddy; Oliver, H. Russell; Touchstone, Placide; William, H. Chapman; Adam, Farren; Celia, Mrs. Farren; Phoebe, Miss Chapman; and Audrey, Mrs. Smith, who was certainly too old for her part. On the whole, this looks like an extremely good cast.

The other two plays of a more serious nature were Bulwer's *Money,* which was given with Brougham as Sir Frederick Blount, and his wife of the moment as Clara. The so-called "Last night of the Season" was given over to Brougham for his night, his better half contributing Donna Violante in *The Wonder,* while he followed in *Born to Good Luck.*

But the adieux were a bit previous. On Monday, the twenty-fifth the *New Era* printed a notice of a change of plans. Because of unfavorable reports concerning health conditions in New Orleans and Mobile and the satisfaction expressed by the St. Louis public, the season was extended one week. I suspect that, like the famous flowers that bloom in the spring, the satisfaction of the local citizens had nothing to do with the case. Actors are just as allergic to yellow fever as anyone else; and, furthermore, while it is in the ascendancy audiences are reluctant to gather.

[56] Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier,* 275.

So the curtain was hauled up again, and the ladies and gentlemen of the company presented themselves in *The Love Chase,* Mrs. Brougham being the Constance of the evening, and her chief collaborators Mrs. Farren, Mrs. Smith, Farren, and Neafie; and also in *Turning the Tables* with Brougham as Jeremiah Bumps, Placide as Jack Humphries, and Mrs. Smith as Patty Larkin. The fare of the few remaining nights was what might be termed "staple," with a single "first time here," *How to Pay the Rent,* with Brougham as Rattle and Mrs. Russell as Mrs. Conscience.

Inasmuch as the penultimate performance was a joint benefit for Mrs. Smith and Placide, one is constrained to wonder just where they would have found themselves if the season had not been extended. On the other hand, benefits were not the impromptu products of spontaneous combustion. Is it not thinkable that Ludlow had had his suspicions about New Orleans for some time, and that the lengthening of the season was not impromptu either? Whatever it was, said season did at last reach its terminus on October 30, and Ludlow, surrounded by his stars and his satellites, was off down the river in the good ship *Caspian,* Captain Freeland.

IX

THE DEPTHS OF THE RED SEA

1844

In the archives of the Missouri Historical Society repose two lean and battered ledgers, long, narrow books with frayed edges and an appropriate appearance of dejection. These two relics are the "return books" of Ludlow and Smith for the spring and fall seasons of 1844. They ought to tell in their own way the whole story of that unhappy year, but within their covers are locked who knows how many secrets? Many more are, I suspect, locked outside. To attempt to unravel the financial snarls of this theatrical enterprise baffles even a most expert accountant today.

In these volumes were entered the daily receipts and expenses of the firm and, except for a few pages which obviously were subjected to some sort of deluge, everything is quite legible. Nevertheless, some of the entries might almost as well so far as we are concerned have been written in Sanskrit. The pages follow throughout the following pattern, this specific example being the one dealing with the affairs of April 13, the fifth night of the spring season and the fourth night of the engagement of William Charles Macready:

First Price	500	
	146	
	354	$354 00
Second Price	250	
	186	
	64	$ 32 00
C. Marks	50	
	50	
		$386 00
Specie		$174 63
Paper		201 00
C. Keemle (7 Box tickets)		7 00
Curtains for Othello		1 62
Postage for L & S		25
Postage on Letter to Forrest		
Dr. McDowell 1 ticket		1 00
Tom Pratt cash		25
		386

What do all these figures represent? We learn from a pencilled notation in the margin that the "first price" seats were those in the parquet and the first tier boxes, which were sold at $1.00 each. So far, so good. Does the 500 indicate the total number of seats in that category? At this point it may be pertinent to quote from Ludlow's description of the Theatre. "The inside of the theatre was very conveniently arranged, consisting of three tiers or galleries of seats and a parquet. The first tier, or 'dress circle,' would seat about three hundred persons; the second tier, or 'family circle,' about three hundred and fifty; the third tier or 'gallery," about four hundred and fifty, and the parquet about four hundred."[1] It will be seen from this that the combined capacity of the parquet and the first tier was approximately 700, not 500. But that is not the only complication. The top figure for the opening night is given, not as 500, but as 600. Does 146 indicate seats which were *unoccupied* or just *unpaid for?* It was, of course, the practice sometimes to rail off the back seats of the parquet and call them "boxes," but in the present instance there was no occasion for so doing because the charges were the same. Nor in either case do we have 700. On the other hand, are we to understand that Ludlow and Smith "papered" the house in such a prodigal manner? It is incredible that they would issue 332 (146 plus 186) complimentary tickets for one performance; that would mean an audience almost half of whom were dead-heads. Furthermore, if such were the case, why were the seven free seats issued to Charles Keemle, the printer, and to Dr. McDowell listed specifically under expenses? Of course, Keemle's may have been a form of payment for services rendered. Conceivably the same might be true of the doctor's, but that hypothesis seems a bit farfetched.

Could the second figure represent, as has been suggested, the tax due the city? In the first place, it is unlikely that it would be divided in three, and in the second place we have under date of May 1 a definite entry of the payment of a "Theatre and water License" of $32.00.

And what about *C. Marks?* (The first entry looks like *Co. Marks,* but I cannot say positively that that is what it is.) After April 17 there are always at least four entries, *Gallery* being inserted

[1]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life as I Found It,* 477.

between *Second Price* and *C. Marks.* On May 11 we have *One Pit C. Mark,* and on June 15, *C. Marks Box* and *C. Marks Pit.* It has been suggested that *C. Marks* was the name of the man who collected the money paid for certain seats, but why should these particular seats have been treated differently from the others? All others were bought and paid for at the box office, and we know from Ludlow that the only separate entrance led to the gallery, not to the pit and boxes. True, for a short time the gallery door keeper's name was Cody, but he was soon supplanted by someone named Tom, apparently Tom Pratt, and his name disappeared from the rolls. Can there have been a man engaged especially to collect from late-comers? Possibly, but, if so, why does his name never appear on the weekly pay roll? Nor have I come across any mention of him by either of the managers. For a few moments the hypothesis suggested itself that these were seats set aside for free Negroes. But the latter were never allowed in the pit or the lower boxes. Furthermore, a playbill now in the Harvard collection bears the following notice: "GALLERY BOXES. Two boxes fitted up in the Gallery—the *left hand* one for free persons of color (Price of Admission to these Boxes: One Dollar.)" It may be said that the *C. Marks Box* was the one in the gallery, but that explanation does not dispose of the *Pit C. Marks.* Another theory advanced was that these were complimentary tickets, but they were always charged for, usually 25 cents, though during certain engagements they were raised. On June 15 the charge for the box seat was 50 cents. So they were not free seats.

From the various pages in these return books, especially from the weekly salary lists, it is possible to pick up much assorted information, for instance that on April 30 there were thirty-eight on the pay roll, but that the picture is complete or anything like complete, I cannot persuade myself. The partners were involved in debts here and there, in St. Louis, New Orleans, and Mobile, notes to businessmen, notes to actors (some apparently in lieu of salaries, some, I suspect, for outright loans), mortgages on their personal real estate, and so on *ad infinitum* and, no doubt, to them *ad nauseam.* Without the details of all these widespread transactions in our hands, I do not see how a complete picture can be drawn. The nightly balances as set down on

these pages are certainly not definitive. (On a loose slip of paper in Ludlow's diary for July there is a list, dated the 13th, of debts paid during the spring season to the amount of $1.407.62. Among them are the following: Mrs. Russell and Dick, $50.00; Mrs. Jefferson, $50.00; Ben De Bar, old due bill, $20.00; Republican office, old bill, $7.50; Maynard, due from Mobile, $12.00; J. M. Field, on note, $125.00; T. Placide, on old note, $64.00; George V. Stanley, old debt due bill; etc., etc.

Once the old-fashioned method of bookkeeping has been at least in part understood, we can, however, draw certain definite conclusions. At the close of business on July 4 the management had in its coffers the sum of $480.03. But on the following morning Ludlow had to pay salaries, wages, and $2.25 for properties, to the amount of $446.10. Result: the balance at the close of the spring season was $33.93. At the end of the fall season, there was a still sorrier tale to tell, the books showing a balance of exactly $4.00.

From these pages, baffling as they are, may yet be extracted some oddly assorted facts. For one thing, pay day was a movable feast, shifting with the winds of circumstance. It is clear too that the Farrens' joint weekly salary was $30, though that sum they did not always find in their envelope, for George Percy sometimes could not wait and cajoled advances from his employers. "Eddy & wife" drew $20 with considerable regularity; "Russell & mother," $19.00 with considerable irregularity. Maynard's weekly stipend was $12.00, but it too had its lapses. Neafie's receipts varied from $3.00 to $27.00; by that I mean the sums entered on pay day. And so on. Certain other individual items may be of interest, for instance: "A lot of hoops for Life in china, 1.00"; "Boiled oil, 12"; "Tacks & treats to night hands, 75"; "Paid on Stetenius' note, 100.00"; and "Whiskey for mixing Lamblack [*sic*] 25." There is no need to go further. The daily entries present such an assortment of heterogeneous odds and ends that no over-all picture can be drawn. All we can safely conclude is, as I have said, that the whole has not been told.

But, whatever the imprint left by the year 1844 on the ledgers of Ludlow and Smith, it cannot by any non-financial criterion be written off as a total loss. No season which brought to the stage at Third

and Olive such performers as William Charles Macready, James H. Hackett, Edwin Forrest, and Henry Placide, can be dismissed as unimportant. If the managers did not profit as they should, the public did, at least that portion thereof which had the wisdom to take advantage of the opportunities opened before it. Before we condemn the unappreciative stay-at-homes, we should recall that they were by no means alone in their guilt, if guilt it were, because the theatrical world was in the doldrums, and business everywhere in the country was bad. Hard times were still general. Moreover, it was election year. We to-day have little conception of the vehemence of the Presidential campaigns of the first half of the last century, and they too inevitably distracted attention from matters aesthetic.

Activities got under way, for richer, for poorer, late in April. The first great attraction was Macready, then on his second visit to the United States. The managers had engaged him for a long series of performances to be divided, not only among their three regular houses in New Orleans, Mobile, and St. Louis, but also, such was their faith in his magnetic powers, in the National Theatre in Cincinnati, which they had rented for a spring season expressly to present him and his later inveterate enemy, Edwin Forrest. Unfortunately, however, they were doomed to a costly disappointment, since, except in New Orleans, their expectations of stampedes in the direction of the box office were not realized, and they were compelled to pay both these celebrities half the gross receipts. Again it seems to have been a case of too much politics and too little money. When it was all over, Smith collapsed, suffering one of the worst illnesses of his life, and almost succumbed, as, indeed, it was widely reported that he had done.

But that misfortune did not overtake him until fall, and it was only April 3 when, with his entourage, he stepped down the gangplank of the *Alex Scott* to the cobblestones of the St. Louis levee.

While awaiting his arrival, those of the local citizenry who cared for night life had been able to find diversion in such entertainments as were afforded by the talented Miss Wyman, a kind of lady magician, at Concert Hall, the Ohio Fat Girl who displayed her curves on the same stage, and exhibitions of "Paintings, Arms and Armor" at the Tobacco Warehouse, concerts, lectures, strong men,

and finally no one less—or, rather, more—than General Tom Thumb himself, who preceded Smith, Macready *et al.* by a few days and was, when the actors arrived, already presenting himself between ten and ten at "Jones' Museum of Arts, Sciences and Curiosities" at the corner of Main and Market Streets, the admission being twenty-five cents, children half price.[3] Doubtless the celebrated midget was beneath the notice of the celebrated tragedian, but I suspect that Manager Smith was not so unaware.

While said functionary was marshaling his forces and shaping up the plays agreed upon, his star relaxed and enjoyed himself; at least, he came about as near to enjoying himself as was possible for such an unhappy, self-tortured individual. On the morning of the sixth, escorted by Mr. James Franciscus, a citizen of position and substance, he was ferried across the river and spent, according to his diary, a very agreeable day or two exploring the Illinois prairies.[5] On his return, after his labors had been resumed, he still found time for a trip to the hilly little town of Alton on the east bank of the Mississippi about twenty miles above St. Louis. He also enjoyed matutinal strolls. "Was gratified in my walk with the sight of the lilac in full bloom, and in some little gardens, tulips, narcissus. It is not only the sweet feeling which the beauty of flowers always imparts to me, a tranquil feeling of delight in their beauty of colour, form, and perfume, but they are associated in my mind with home, with dear England, and soothe me with their influence."[4]

The opening of the season was originally scheduled for Monday, April 8, but for some reason not revealed, it had to be postponed, and it was not until twenty-four hours later that the curtain rose on the dismal battlements of Elsinore, *Hamlet* having been selected as the medium for the visitor's debut. In his diary Macready often recorded his impressions of his performances and of his associates, the latter usually most unflattering, but his comments in this case, though in much the usual vein, are not very enlightening. But we do know from comments on other pages of the diary that his fellow-players

[3]*Missouri Republican,* April 1, 1844. The real name of this famous dwarf was Charles S. Stratton. He was two feet, one inch tall, and weighed fifteen pounds. At this time he was seven years old.

[5]*The Diaries of William Charles Macready, 1833-1851,* II, 268.

[4]*Ibid.*

were definitely not to his liking. If only Macready had practiced a little discrimination in his denunciation of the stage folk among whom his lines fell, whether in America or England, we might learn something of the capabilities of the Ludlow and Smith corps from his observations, but inasmuch as he was almost never anything like satisfied, we cannot draw any definite conclusions in this instance, whatever our suspicions may be.

His support on his opening night consisted of John Ryder as the Ghost, Joe Field as Laertes, J. M. Weston as Horatio, Eddy as the King, Farren as Polonius, Smith as "the Grave Digger," Mrs. Field as Ophelia, and Mrs. Farren as the Queen. Probably Ryder was the only one he found even acceptable. The latter was a competent English actor whom he had brought with him to this country and whom in a sense he was training. Of this performance there is, so far as I know, no further record than the newspaper advertisements naming the cast.

Poor Macready! It is difficult to conceive of a more unhappy individual. He seems to have been a mass of neuroses. Except for the adoring members of his family circle and a few admiring friends, he seems to have found most of the human race in the main offensive. Certainly the members of his profession (which he despised) found working with him a trial of nerves and endurance. Oddly enough, he apparently liked Smith; at least, after their association had ended, he wrote him a really cordial letter, and, whatever his failings, Macready was no hypocrite.[5] And Smith, in his turn, did not dislike him. "Of his goodness of heart I have had many opportunities of knowing. He has been called haughty and proud. I never found him so in the least."[6] Yet, at the same time, he unquestionably did find him extremely vexatious. "When he came to himself between the acts, he was irritable and fault-finding; never satisfied with those who acted with him, sending for this one and that one for the purpose of administering a lecture, and often, until I gave him notice that I would not go, dispatching his servant to the manager, to whom he would pour out complaint after complaint, until the rising

[5]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 185.
[6]*Ibid.*, 184.

of the curtain called him to his duties on the stage."[7] Undoubtedly, setting his standards by London productions, the star must have found much to gall him. It is, therefore the more regrettable that his observations were not more objective.

Ludlow's experiences were of a piece with his partner's, but he records no impressions of the goodness of heart noted by Smith. "I never," he writes, "met with a man so peculiar in his disposition and habits as William C. Macready. According to his own showing, he was continually finding fault with himself for his ill-temper, yet continually indulging in a display of it, even on the most trivial occasions. He must have been a very weak, irresolute man."[8]

Macready's vagaries are too well known to call for discussion here beyond the reactions of his local employers. Nor is this any place for a detailed study of his art. What is germane is the course of his St. Louis engagement, and the impression he made upon local playgoers. For information on that score we are indebted chiefly to the critic of the *New Era*, who seems to have had some understanding. The *Republican* contented itself for the most part with puffs which add little to our store of knowledge. (Of the other contemporary dailies, I have seen no copies for this particular year.) In the first place, because of Macready's pre-eminence and his high charges—half the gross receipts—the managers felt justified in raising the prices from 75 cents to a dollar, and that procedure never "sat well" with the Fourth Estate. Nevertheless, this irritation was discounted, and the performances were taken for what they seemed to the reviewers to be worth.

The first review of interest is the *New Era's* of the second night of the season, when in a change of bill made during the course of the day (that is, after the advertisement was supplied the editor of the morning *Republican*) *Richelieu* was substituted for *Macbeth*. The writer commented (April 11) that "*The Theatre* was again visited on yesterday evening by a very considerable audience, but it was not near so much crowded as on the first night." This statement is corroborated by Ludlow's diary. Whereas *Hamlet* had attracted

[7]There is no space here to quote Smith's evaluations of Macready's various characterizations, but he was a shrewd and experienced observer, and his comments are, therefore, of value (*Theatrical Management*, 184).

[8]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 594.

$656.50 into the house, *Richelieu* drew but $311.50, less than half. "The part of Richelieu," continues the scribe, "was acted by Macready in a style and manner peculiar to himself, and he was received with great applause."

The Bulwer romance was followed by *Virginius*, to the tune of only $252, which must have been a bitter pill for Smith, and something of a humiliation for the actor. The latter, perhaps for that reason, was not in a tranquil mood when he made his entry in his diary, the first, by the way, in four days.

Acted Virginius *most vilely*—never so bad; the house was bad, I was ill, the actors were incorrect, and one of them was very impertinent—impertinent in the literal sense of the word, for he was talking folly, and it was insolent. He is a disgusting puppy, and looked very foolish when obliged to resort to a falsehood to screen himself. These players![9]

The *New Era's* observer was again on the job, and he vouchsafes us some real information.

Macready's third appearance was well attended last night, but not so well as the managers had a right to expect, from their exertions to please and gratify. The character of *Virginius* was sustained by Mr. Macready in a better style than that of either of his two preceding performances. Mrs. Field as Virginia, and J. M. Field as Icilius, sustained well the principal actor, and so did Mr. Ryder as Appius Claudius. The character of Old Dentatus was very well acted by Mr. Farren. The other actors had their parts well enough committed, but with them there was too little manifestation of feeling—they were too calm, listless and indifferent for the scenes in which they are engaged. The object of an actor should be to enter into the spirit of the play—to imagine himself in the midst of the dangers and conflicts described—to act as a man would probably do thus situated. If so, we would have had more indication of emotion and strong passion—more excited action and more truth to nature. Those who attempt the populace are too tame—their mobs are too quiet and harmless, and they look too much like they were afraid to move and speak. This is a fault that is easy of correction; it may be done in a few rehearsals.[10]

The writer then had some kind words to say for the afterpiece, *The Lover by Proxy*, but concludes with the criticism that "Most

[9] *The Diaries of William Charles Macready*, II, 268.
[10] *New Era*, April 12, 1844.

usually the greatest fault in the theatre is the want of proper attention to the minor and subordinate parts of the play."

The next evening, Macready had a rest, and he went to Alton. The occasion was a benefit for the Fields, and was devoted to *John Jones of the War Office, The Artful Dodger,* and *Gabrielle* or *A Night's Hazard,* a "new play, adapted from the French by J. M. Field." It will be recalled that in 1841 the Fields had appeared in *Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle,* Joe's adaptation of Alexandre Dumas' play of the same name. *Gabrielle* seems to have been another version of the same original. Six years later, the Dumas piece was to serve as the basis for Fanny Kemble's *The Duke's Wager.*[11] It was at this time a general custom, though by no means an inviolable one, for a visiting star to volunteer for the benefit of a colleague of any consequence, but Macready, feeling no love or respect for his profession or its practitioners, saw no reason for lending his services to the Fields. Indeed, he probably was not asked to do so since they doubtless knew in advance what his answer would be. At all events, the evening of April 12 found him in Alton, and the beneficiaries found themselves with little for which to render thanks. The intake was $183.25, and the expenses of the evening were probably reckoned at $125. (The return book does not give the charges.) But they were doomed from the start. Despite the esteem in which they were held, there was not the slightest chance of a good house on a starless night in the midst of the engagement of such a luminary as Macready, especially in a notoriously bad theatrical year. The Fields, together with the other members of the company, had been not only supporting the star but contributing their bits to the inevitable afterpieces. But all this counted for naught. Furthermore, the gentleman from the *New Era* developed a fit of squeamishness, and considered "the subject matter of the play [*Gabrielle*] such as ought not to be exhibited on the stage."

On the following evening, Saturday, Macready resumed with *Werner,* supported by the usual persons, notably Ryder as Gabor, Field as Ulric, Mrs. Farren as Josephine, and Mrs. Field as Ida. The receipts were $386.[12] Meanwhile Tom Thumb had been carrying on at Jones' Museum, but announced through the *Republican*

[11]Quinn: *American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War,* 253.
[12]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, April 14, 1844.

(April 13) that his benefit on the 13th would bring his engagement to a close. He promised "to exert himself to gratify his visitors. He will give some grotesque imitations, sing some new songs, and dance a pas seul." Macready would not exert himself in any of these ways, and I wonder how many people preferred the imitations and *pas* of the Lilliputian to the acting of the tragedian. Unfortunately, Mr. Jones has left us no account books.

April 15th.—Acted Iago, taking much pains with the part. The audience did not *notice* me on my appearance; to Mr. Ryder, Messrs. Field and Farren they gave long and loud plaudits in receiving them! Throughout the play, too, they really bestowed as much, if not *more*, applause upon the unmeaning rant and gabble of these people than they gave to me; and really I *tried* to act Iago in my old earnest, "honest" way, but the difference is not of importance to them. In my last scene, which I was acting in a very true manner, as I was taking my departure from the room, the *continued* vulgar speeches, ejaculations, and laughs of some ruffians in the second tier quite overcame my patience. I threw up the attempt and walked right off.

This account in Macready's diary is the sole source of information about this performance except that the papers tell us that Ryder played Othello, and that Eliza Field was the Desdemona, Field the Cassio, Weston the Roderigo, Farren the Brabantio, Eddy the Duke, and Mary Ann Farren the Emilia. The receipts were $361.50.[18]

A new low was reached on Tuesday when there was only $122 in the house for *The Merchant of Venice* and *My Aunt*. This was even less than for the Macreadyless Field benefit. There was, however, a reasonable explanation. Henri Vieuxtemps, the celebrated Belgian violinist, was competing, with a concert at the Planters House. Yet from the actor's point of view there was compensation of a sort, though not financial. "Acted Shylock," he wrote in his diary on the 16th, "I think, and the audience, few in number (Mr. Ryder's Benefit, poor man!), seemed to appreciate and understand the play better than any we have yet had. I suppose we had only the few who cared for Shakespeare, the large majority having been drafted off to Vieuxtemps' *only* concert at the planter's house. His

[18]Ludlow and Smith Return Book.

bill is a curiosity; he is rivalling Ole Bull in quackery."[14] The Portia of the evening was Mrs. Farren.

Just at this juncture Ludlow arrived from Mobile accompanied by Tom Placide and Eliza Field's sister, Mrs. W. H. Smith. He landed at midnight, and how the news must have cheered him! "Mr. Macready's Engagement is a failure!!" he wrote in his diary. "Heaven help the taste of the people! or their pockets."

The next evening wrote finis to the association between Macready and St. Louis. He took his benefit in *Macbeth*, $587.50 being paid in at the box office. This was considerably more than the receipts of most of the nights of his engagement, but still fell short of the $656.50 of his opening. The *New Era* was once more on the job, and from its issue of the 18th I cull the following critique:

Mr. Macready had a full and fashionable house last night for his benefit, and he fully satisfied public expectation. He acted Macbeth in excellent style, and we think that he succeeded in it much better than in any other play in which we have witnessed his performance. He was well sustained. Messrs. Field and Ryder acquitted themselves well; so did several other actors. Mrs. Farren made a first rate Queen. The witches performed well their incantations and sorceries. . . . We think that there has been a decided improvement since the company came; the subordinate parts of the plays are acted with more animation and earnestness of manner, and greater evidence of a proper appreciation of the true spirit of the play. . . .

From Ludlow's diary (April 17) we learn that when he came ashore, he found his name "up in the bills for Hecate." Just how Macready approved of that detail of casting it is not difficult to guess. Nor can he have been much more enthusiastic over Smith as one of the Witches. (I am assuming that he was in his usual role.)

Of greater interest perhaps is the comment of the star himself, jotted down at the end of the day:

17th. To my great satisfaction I received a large pair of buffalo horns, and a grand pair of elk horns from a Mr. Whatton. Rested. Acted Macbeth really well, too well for St. Louis, though the audience were much more decorous, attentive, and appreciative than

[14] *The Diaries of William Charles Macready*, II, 269.

I have heretofore found them. I suppose they begin to understand me. Was called for and bowed.[15]

Two days later he boarded the *West Wind*. Exit Macready, bearing elk and buffalo horns. To do the man justice, it must be admitted that there was more than meets the modern eye where the deportment of the audiences was concerned. When it comes to this subject, both managers lie very low in their memoirs, and seldom did any evidence find its way into the public press of the day, but occasionally a little information does seep through, twice through the columns of the *New Era*. On June 4 following, these intriguing sentences were inserted into a review, and this is probably as good a time as any to quote them. "There was a full and lively house at the Theatre last night. The acting on the stage was good, and the cavorting in the pit, boxes and galleries was extremely interesting. A new performer called Peg-leg, showed off in the gallery with great applause. The managers ought to obtain his services permanently." And again on October 10: "In a theatre like ours, by no means distinguished for that quiet propriety, so encouraging to an actor, and gratifying to an author, the unusual stillness proved the popularity of the writer, and the high breeding of the audience." Between the pages of the Return Book someone has left what appears to be the bottom of a playbill or program which sets forth some of the rules of the house, the last of which reads: "It is expected, that Gentlemen will not wear their hats in the Dress Circle, while the performance is progressing."

Still more details are to be found in the series of articles heretofore referred to in the *St. Louis Home Journal* of 1868. They remind one of Washington Irving's descriptions of the behavior of the New York audiences of his day. This account was aimed at the St. Louis playgoers of 1837, but there is no reason to conclude that their manners had changed greatly in seven years.

. . . . They chewed apples, eat pea nuts, sucked candy, chewed tobacco, and behaved themselves altogether in a very emphatic and self-assertive style. Conversations carried on at the top of the voice

[15] *Ibid.* The name *Whatton* does not appear in the local directory for 1844, but the edition of 1842 lists a "John D. Whatton (Amer. Fur. Co.)." (*St. Louis Directory for the Year 1842.*)

between would-be critics were not unusual, and favorite actors were affectionately admonished and appealed to from pit and gallery. One of the most terrible of these noisy gods was a man of the name of O'Blennys, who may be seen usually on Fourth street when the air is warm. He is tall, upright, and shows no mark of age except by a wig, which is a very plain-speaking piece of head gear, and proclaims itself openly for what it is. His face is haggard, and he is said to be connected with a faro bank. He goes to the theater occasionally, but his voice is silent; pit and gallery know him no more. O'Blennys is said to be one of the few surviving specimens of that reckless, dare-devil race of beings called river men, who were half horse, half alligator, and could whip their weight of bull-dogs. . . .

What chance had the actors against such a hybrid monster? Yet Macready was not without some cause for gratitude. Not even these terrors of the Mississippi River ever pelted him with rotten eggs or hurled the putrid carcass of a sheep at his feet. Such courtesies awaited him in New York and Cincinnati five years later.[16]

P. S. "As far as the management was concerned, Mr. Macready's engagement was a failure."[17] "Cook (A.B.) settled with Macready—I find our share of his engagement after paying him amounted to $191.00 per night—paid him in all $1339.00."[18] It is interesting to note from the Return Book that Macready's admirers were limited almost exclusively to the top bracket, boxes and parquet at $1.00. Of these, 2423 admissions were paid during his stay; in the second bracket only 349; and in the third only 27. Chaperoned by Smith, the star departed for Cincinnati, where with a detachment of players culled from the Ludlow and Smith forces he participated in a brief and again disappointing engagement. But that is another story.

The great star Macready is gone, and the regular stock company is full, and are now acting without the aid of the great tragedian; but there are many very good actors in the regular company. Since the arrival of Mr. Ludlow, Mrs. Smith and Mr. Placide, they have a sufficient number of actors to form a very good company, and to a majority of the people we think that their performances will be more acceptable than those of much puffed stars.

[16] *Macready's Reminiscences,* 591-592.
[17] Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 602.
[18] Diary of N. M. Ludlow, April 18, 1844.

Thus spake the *New Era* on the 20th. As a matter of fact, Macready was still physically in St. Louis, but he was gone from the stage. As for the delight of the local playgoers, it may have been there, but it certainly did not manifest itself in the figures set down nightly by the senior partner. On that very evening, in fact, there was only $77.50 in the house; the old prices—75, 50, and 25 cents—had been restored. The plays were *The Heir at Law*, Ludlow being the Doctor Pangloss, and *Mr. and Mrs. White*. The company was undoubtedly stronger for the addition of Mrs. Smith and Tom Placide, not to speak of Neafie, "Mr. Russell & mother," and an unidentified Sullivan. "Mr. Russell & mother" were, I am sure, Dick and our old friend of many seasons. Frequent later references confirm this.

Nor was $77.50 rock bottom. Many times during the ensuing weeks was the figure to fall far below that; indeed, after the first of the month, that sum must have seemed like riches to Ludlow. *Man and Wife* and *Boots at the Swan* on the 23rd drew only $44.75, and the local premiere of Lovell's *Love's Sacrifice* but $98.50. The cast of this novelty included Neafie as Matthew Elmore, Maynard as Lafont, Farren as Friar Dominic, Placide as Jean Ruse, Mrs. Farren as Margaret Elmore, and Mrs. Smith as Herminie. The *Republican* (April 27) especially praised the contributions of Mrs. Farren and Placide. Four nights later, perhaps assisted by a generous puff in the *New Era*, the novelty attracted $121.00, but thereafter no such sum was even approached—on May 8 for *The Rent Day* and *Prettyjohn & Co.* there was only $33.50—until May 14 when, in honor of their anniversary, the members of the Fire Department were incited to attend and receipts rose to $254.50. This was quite an occasion. By this time the Fields were back from Cincinnati, and performed in *Town and Country* and *Nicholas Nickleby* (as Smike and Mantilini). Between the two pieces Mary Ann Farren recited an "Address written for the Third Annual Celebration of the St. Louis Fire Department, by M. C. FIELD, Esq." In his diary Ludlow reported that the house was "*full* of Firemen" and that "All went off admirably."

The degree of his desperation can be gauged by the fact that he next engaged the Columbia Minstrels in the vain hope that they

would appeal to the troubled public, using them first (on May 15) as an afterpiece to *Much Ado about Nothing* with the Fields as Beatrice and Benedick, but the result was only $76.50 in the till. Shakespeare and black-face combined proved to be not very potent medicine for managerial ills. (The Return Book shows only 15 at the first price, 114 at the second, 31 in the gallery, and 2 C. Marks, whatever they were.)

Essaying another tack, the Manager in Distress turned next to the German actors in the city, and engaged two of them, probably hoping to lure some of their fellow-countrymen to the Theatre. They were introduced between the Fields in *The Heart of Midlothian* and the minstrels. I shall draw upon Ludlow's Diary for an account of offering. "Paid Salaries to day, that were due on Tuesday last [a significant item]—2d night of the Columbian Minstrels—and first & only one of the German performance—There was a farce played in German from Kotzebue called *Die Beichte* (The Confes-

Mr. Icks Mad. Thielman

sion) One man & one woman & a child—resembling in plot our piece called Personation." It also, he observed, was reminiscent of a scene from *The Honey Moon*. According to the *Republican* (May 16), Madame Thielman was to sing in both German and English. This lady I have been unable to identify. Neither she nor her companion is listed in contemporary St. Louis directories (1842 and 1845). But a Herr Icks, presumably the same man, had, Dr. Odell records, taken part in German productions at the Broadway and Franklin Theatres in New York some years previously, once at least being designated as Herr Icks of the German Theatre in New Orleans.[19] Unfortunately, this maneuvre of Ludlow's, like his others, proved to be abortive, the yield being only $90.50, and this interesting bilingual experiment came to naught.[20]

But the two guest artists apparently were not too discouraged. The *Republican* printed on the morning of May 30 a brief notice which was rich in significance for the St. Louis theatrical history of later years.

[19]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 184, 395, and 581.
[20]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, May 16, 1844.

The German Theatre. . . . A company of Germans are at present performing in the hall of Mechanics Institute, in this city, and those who have visited their Theatre speak in high terms of praise of their performance. Our German population have now an opportunity to enjoy an intellectual treat in their own language.

The most important single event during the interim between stars was the farewell benefit of Joe and Eliza Field. Financially it was a complete failure, the receipts being only $105.25, $20.00 under expenses. The Fields deserved better of their fellow-citizens. As members of the company they had labored hard and had through several years contributed no little to the entertainments on Third and Olive. Personally, furthermore, they were above reproach, their lives being models of good behavior. Now that Joe was, for the time being at least, quitting his old profession to enter that of journalism, it is regrettable that they were not given a good send-off, but the times were bad, and no worse time could have been chosen than between the visits of two famous stars. Probably they understood. At all events, Joe soon began with his brother Mat and Charles Keemle the publication of his famous *Reveille,* and the couple settled down as private citizens.

May 20 marked a gratifying, if not enduring, change in the fortunes of the theatrical firm. This was brought about by the return of James H. Hackett after an absence of two and a half years. As before, his arrival was preceded by a little haggling. On April 28, Ludlow addressed him in Louisville a lengthy letter, part business, part personal, for they were old friends, upon which I shall draw for some pertinent facts.

Friend Hackett:

Taking up the business part of your letter—We are not aware whether our Mr. Smith has written, as he promised, to you, or not—Briefly, and decisively *then* if you are positively determined and immoveably fixed, on the terms you speak of, we cannot meet this season for business purposes . . . those who are keeping theatres open, on uncertain grounds—at the same time that experience has taught them that they are doing so, for the benefit of *others* rather than themselves—we say—if you feel disposed to come to St. Louis, and play some six or seven nights sharing with us after $125 pr night (one hundred and twenty-five dolls)—much less than our real expenses

and $25 pr night less than the charges to you in 1840 [Doesn't he mean 1841?] with a Benefit at half the Receipts—why come along, as soon as you finish at *Nashville*. . . .

Confidential

To give you every possible aid (for auld lang syne) in forming your own conclusions with regard to this proposed engagement, I herein send you a statement of our season thus far [Account of Macready engagement]. . . . Our Stock nights nothing but plain pieces and old ones—for nine successive nights,—commencing immediately after Macready Ben—have averaged $109—*four* of which were rainey and cold disagreeable nights—this I consider a sure indication that with any *extra* attraction we can average $125 per night—aye, more for any week, with a tolerable share of fair weather—I have always found the two weeks following a great *Star*, the worst of the season.

Yours in friendship
L

Just why either writer or recipient should have found this letter attractive bait, I fail to perceive. If Hackett was to share only after the deduction of $125.00 for expenses, why should he hurry on to the scene on Ludlow's assurance that he felt confident that the receipts would amount to that? But come he did—with malaria. I shall let Ludlow tell the story.

May 19. Rain, Rain, yet Hackett who arrived here on Friday last has been sick with chills & fevers each day since Doctor McCabe has got so now that he thinks he can play tomorrow night.

May 20. Rain Rain—Still Rain—nearly the whole of Front Street covered with the rise of the River. . . . Rehearsed Henry 4th —Hackett did not come to rehearsal thought it more prudent to keep his room though not very sick. . . . First night of Hackett $253.25 although it rained nearly all the day. . . .

May 24. Clear—but rather too warm in the sun for comfort—Miss Eliza Petrie arrived here from Cincinnati to play till the fourth of July. . . . Re-engaged Hackett for 4 nights—same terms only the second Benefit we are to have $125 before he gets half. . . . Mr. Hackett repeated Falstaff in King Henry 4th to $173.25.

I consider this engagement of his decidedly a good hit—quite unexpected.

May 28. Collier was pd. $100 again, in Rent of theatre—he has been paid the same sum every Tuesday since the Theatre opend this

season. . . . Rained about time for the play to begin. . . . Hackett's Benfit $178.25. Takes all after $125.00.

Ludlow's sights must have been low indeed, if he considered this engagement a bonanza, that is if his expenses really were $125.00 a night. As I break the figures down, the firm's gross share amounted to $1,271.60½ for eight nights. Reckoning the expenses at the sum named by Ludlow, we find the net profit to have been $271.60½. So much for Ludlow and Smith. As for the star, he pocketed $410.60½.

Artistically, if the *New Era* is right, the engagement left nothing to be desired. Hackett was seen twice each in *King Henry IV, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Monsieur Mallet,* and *The Kentuckian,* and once each in *Rip Van Winkle, The Man of the World,* and *Militia Training.* His best house was his first benefit, when he appeared in *The Man of the World* and *Monsieur Mallet,* when the "dem'd total" was $365.75. The two poorest were the second and third nights of his re-engagement, *The Kentuckian* and *Monsieur Mallet,* and *King Lear;* on the latter night he made nothing, the receipts falling short of $125.00. People were not interested in his tragic efforts, and his Lear attracted only $115.50. His share of his second benefit was only $26.62½.

But, to return to the aesthetic phase, the critic averred that "No person can have an adequate idea of the character of Falstaff until they have seen him perform. Such acting is much better calculated to please a great majority of the people than deep and solemn tragedy" (May 21). While the reviewer liked his other impersonations, he felt that only as the fat knight did he reach the heights. "He was better in plain English than in broken Dutch, Scotch, or French" (May 24). For his support he had enjoyed the services of the Farrens, Eliza Petrie, Mrs. Russell, Ludlow, Neafie, Maynard, Eddy, and Russell among others, and was, I daresay, less critical than Macready. In the *dramatis personae* of the afterpiece we find a new name, that of James McVicker, later the magnate of the Chicago stage, who, having left the print-shop, was now learning the ropes of the theatre.

With the departure of Hackett, the Theatre returned to more or less humdrum productions, though behind the scenes everything was

not as humdrum as what occurred before them, despite the fact that Ludlow cast about in all directions for diversions which *might* help him at least to fade the bright red in his ledger to a paler tint.

On May 29 he revived *The Gambler's Fate,* an old moral drama adapted from the French, with a moving appeal to the temperance folk in a blurb in the press (*Republican,* May 29), in which it was stated that the "management, having been called upon lately at several times, by respectable citizens, to have this drama enacted at the Theatre, embrace cheerfully the present opportunity to produce it. . . ." He, moreover, used the papers to see that the plea went home.

THE GAMBLER'S FATE

It is accomplished! shade of my sainted sire, thy curse is on me! I see! I see! The Gambler's Destiny is written on the Gates of Hell!

To Neafie's lot it fell to utter these inspired lines in the role of Albert Germaine, "a wealthy and respected young man" and husband of Julia, Mrs. Farren. Farren himself played the "sainted sire," who seems not to have been too saintly to give voice to well-aimed imprecations. Mrs. Warren played the hero's small son, and Tom Placide, Baalamb, while Maynard was Malcour (a name which simply shrieks infamy), Albert's "supposed friend, an expert gambler."

The next day, Ludlow ran into trouble of a different sort, to which he adverted briefly in his diary (May 30). "Had a Grand blow up with Farren. *He—Placide & Maynard* came to the last rehearsal of Miller & Men not knowing either words or business: Farren was very insulting—I'll never forgive him. Put out hand bills putting off Miller & Men closed the Theatre this night." A dark house, even for one night, did not help the exchequer. The next day, having written an account of the fracas to Smith, he "Had a rehearsal of Miller & Men this morning when it was pretty generally perfect, except Mr. T. Placide, who did not come till I wrote to him; and when he came knew but little of the part of Karl."[21] Eventually, on June 1, *The Miller and his Men* did reach the stage, and, probably thanks to its new scenery, actually ran three successive nights,

[21] *Ibid.,* May 31, 1844.

bringing in no less than $626.50, but the affair had not ended. On June 5, while the town was overflowing with Whigs on hand for a Clay convention, the harassed manager made this entry in his personal record: "Addressed a Circular to Mess. Farren—Placide, & Maynard saying that in paying their sal this day we did not wave [*sic*] the right to forfeit for their imperfection in the last Rehearsal of *Miller & his Men*—would leave it as a matter to be settled at the end of the present season. Mr. Placide said he was willing to lose the nights salary, but would sue if anything more was taken. I made no reply to that—Also said he wished he was 'clear of the engagement'—I said nothing." Ludlow's position must have been a trifle embarrassing in view of the fact that the offending comedian held a note of the firm, which his employers were unable to meet in full.[22]

Next Ludlow tried the wiles of Herr Alexander, a German magician, to whom he offered the same terms as to Hackett, sharing after $125.00, though he did, in view of the meagre returns, weaken and say that on the benefit night he would write the expenses off at $100.00. But I cannot see that Alexander made anything one way or the other, inasmuch as the receipts of his four evenings were $105.50 —$65.50, $80.00, and $75.25. The papers apparently approved of his efforts, but to no purpose. Later, he moved to Concert Hall, while a Mr. McCann challenged him at the Museum [23] Having had bad luck with the Germans, Ludlow now decided to see what he could make of the French and entered into negotiations with a M. Mathieu, "a very gentlemanly young man, in regard to an engagement with the french opera company," but the negotiations led to nothing.[24] Other parleys, however, did bear fruit, for he "arranged this morning [June 3] with Morrison of the firm of Collier & Morrison for the St. Louis theatre for four months, from the 5th July coming [?] for the Gross sum of $1,000—payable at the rate of $100 pr week commencing with the ending of our first full week of the Fall Season."

Next on the list of attractions was Edwin Forrest, who, early in May had played under Smith's direction a season of eleven nights in Cincinnati, averaging, according to Sol, $269.00 a night, $153.00 less

[22] *Ibid.*, June 10, 1844.
[23] *Missouri Republican*, June 17, 1844; *New Era*, June 8, 1844.
[24] Diary of N. M. Ludlow, June 4, 1844.

than Macready.[25] On the evening of June 9, he and his wife, the rift in their domestic bliss not yet having manifested itself, arrived on the *Frolic*. Unfortunately, Ludlow had expected them the day before, and, when they had not put in an appearance, had announced a benefit for "THE SUFFERERS BY THE LATE GREAT FIRE IN NEW ORLEANS" for Monday evening, the 10th. The bill advertised is, by the way, not without its significance. A few days before, a St. Louis father had availed himself of the "unwritten law" to shoot his daughter's seducer, and the local papers had been featuring the crime, if crime it were. So, in order to do his all for the fire victims, Ludlow announced a piece called *Seduction* or *Father and Daughter*, the origin of which I have been unable to trace. Probably, this was another case of a rose "by any other name" smelling as sweet. The handbills had all been struck off and the copy was in the hands of the typesetters at the *Republican*, but when the tragedian arrived, he made one of those rapid-fire changes theatrical procedure in those days made possible, and substituted *Richelieu*. The sufferers could wait.

Forrest played nine nights and a benefit. "His engagement was not a success," wrote Ludlow in his book.[26] Smith in his recollections calls it "a very poor one."[27] In his diary Smith went into detail: *Richelieu*, $253.00; *Metamora*, $454.25; *Othello*, $347.50; *The Gladiator*, $519.50; *King Richard III*, $341.25; *Metamora*, $234.50; *Jack Cade*, $405.50; *The Gladiator*, $227.25; *Jack Cade*, $278.75; *King Lear*, $377.00. Total: $3,442.50, $344.25 per night, "Forrest receiving *half!*" Sol's addition is incorrect. He apparently copied the first two entries wrong, for, if Ludlow's, which are correct, are used, Sol's total is correct also. Evidently the terms for the benefit were identical with those for the other nights. The most potent drawing-card, it will be seen, was *The Gladiator*, Dr. Bird's melodrama, which totalled $746.75 in two performances. Next in popularity were Stone's *Metamora*, $688.75, and Conrad's *Jack Cade*, $684.25, in two showings each. The opening *Richelieu* drew the smallest audience, but that fact is easily explained by the change of bill. Un-

[25] Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 184.
[26] Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 602.
[27] Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 181.

like Macready's, Forrest's supporters did not in the main inhabit the most expensive seats. On his ten nights, there were 1,409 $1.00 seats paid for; 3,340, fifty cent; 1,323 in the gallery; and 89 "C. Marks." That is, there were more than three times as many in the lower brackets as in the highest. In Macready's case there were six times as many in the expensive seats as in the cheap ones. Hackett too had found his support in the lower brackets, but the difference is not quite so pronounced as in Forrest's case, the two figures being 887 and 2,359.

Just why the managers were so grieved and bitter over this engagement I cannot see, especially after what had gone before. After all, they cleared $471.25 in the ten nights after their theoretical $1,250.00 expenses had been met. Macready's average had been $382.50, less than $40.00 more. Hackett's, over which Ludlow sang paeans, only $210.87, though of course the latter had not commanded "clear halves."

Whoever it was who wrote the reviews in the *New Era* obviously was no adherent of the great American tragedian. "Those who profess to be critics and judges in such matters," he wrote on June 17, "express great admiration for his acting. We make no such pretensions, and of course it is unnecessary for us to express any opinion on the subject." And he didn't. He printed the paid advertisements, and let it go at that. The editor of the *Republican* was somewhat more friendly. He printed the puffs probably supplied by Ludlow, and in addition allowed himself one laudatory notice.

E. FORREST, the *unrivalled* tragedian, appeared last evening in BIRD'S tragedy of the Gladiator, and the bursts of applause which greeted him throughout, exhibited in an unequivocal manner the power of the actor. His personation of Othello, on the evening previous, to our mind, not only surpassed his former masterly efforts in the same character, but placed him in the minds of those who witnessed it, far above the reach of any living actor. In the opening scenes which exhibit his fond love for Desdemona, it was as tender as deep passion could portray it; and when jealousy poisoned his peace, the change was terrific. Those who see a superiority in MACREADY over our own great actor, must be blinded by prejudice; for not only has foreign critics pronounced him great, but the applause forced from the coldest spectator of his efforts, manifests that skill in the actor, which MACREADY fails in. We shall

continue to consider FORREST superior, learned critics opinion to the contrary notwithstanding.[28]

I shall not go into detail in the matter of Forrest's support, but shall note a few leads. There is no record in the case of *Richelieu,* but some other assignments can be found in the *Republican.* All the heroines were entrusted to Mrs. Farren. In *Othello* Neafie, of course, drew Iago; in *The Gladiator,* Pharsarius; in *King Richard III,* Richmond; and in *King Lear,* Edgar. No doubt he made other appearances, but they were not mentioned.

On June 19, Ludlow made these entries in his diary: "I dined this day with Mr. & Mrs. Forrest in their private Parlour at the Planters House. . . . Mr. Ince applied for the loan of $10. Obliged to refuse him—too tight pinched ourselves."

Forrest gone, Ludlow got around to the benefit for the New Orleans fire sufferers, which, to his disgust, grossed only $63.50; this low figure he ascribed to popular preoccupation with politics.[29] Moreover, the recent seduction and murder were no longer prominently featured in the press. In his diary on the 21st the manager wrote: "Benefit to night for the Sufferers by the great fire at New Orleans Recpts $63.50—great oh! King!—I have decided to send it *all* to New Orleans without one cent deduction—I did originally intend to hold the expenses on that night at $100—But as the Cincinnati paper says that 'Sol Smith' had very liberally given the entire recpts—and I know he had, I couldn't be less generous."

Forrest was succeeded by the last dramatic star to tread the boards of the St. Louis Theatre for nearly a year; once more it is necessary to report disappointment. The newcomer, while he lacked the sensational qualities and the fame of his predecessors, was an artist of such gifts and sincerity that his name was in his own time almost invariably mentioned with respect, even deference, by all who had occasion to refer to him or his work. "As far as my observation has extended," says Ludlow in his book, "and I have seen the larger proportion of what may be termed the prominent actors of America, I have never beheld one who could approach to the excellence of Henry Placide as a genuine comedy actor; and that, too, of unlimited

[28] *Missouri Republican,* June 14, 1844.
[29] Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 603.

range."[80] Odell characterizes him as one of the "greatest ornaments" of the Park Theatre, "who stands immortally fixed with those other notable American actors, William Rufus Blake, William Warren, and John Gilbert, as representing the best and truest traditions of acting in the glorious old comedies of Sheridan, Goldsmith, Holcroft, &c."[81] And Allston Brown says of him: "He is an actor of the good old school—a school wherein is taught the lesson that a strict adherence to truth in the delineation of a character, constitutes one of its chief, if not the most essential, feature of the dramatic art."[82] Yet on this man St. Louis turned its collective back.

Hoping for the best, Ludlow had prepared the way with suitable publicity, at the same time announcing that the "old prices" would be continued—no raise to a dollar as in the cases of Macready and Forrest with their "clear halves." Placide, he said, would make his debut as Grandfather Whitehead, "a character in which he stands alone and unrivalled." He went on to add that this play was "among the most successful that has been performed in either England or America for many years," a fairly strong statement. This puff may not have been actually phrased by the manager, but the substance was doubtless his contribution, and he noted in his diary (June 21) that he had written "an article on Mr. H. Placide which appeared editorially in the 'Organ' of today."

Three nights later he penned the following entry: "Oh! I am unhappy!!! . . . *Mr. Henry Placide* appeared for the first time in the city of St. Louis. Was well recd to house of $181." He would have been more unhappy still could he have foreseen that not again during this engagement—indeed, not again during the spring season except once—would the dollars and cents in his till add up to that uninspiring total. On the 25th Placide was seen in two parts, Michael Perrin in *Secret Service* and the title role of *Uncle John* to $65.75. The next evening a repetition of *Grandfather Whitehead* with *A Nabob for an Hour* raised the mercury again, but only to $163.75. After that, one woe did tread upon another's heels, so fast they followed—$51.00, $60.25, $45.25, and for the closing benefit,

[80] *Ibid.*, 604.
[81] Odell: *Annals*, III, 87.
[82] Brown: *American Stage.*

$157.00! "Mr. H. Placide played Secret Service & Double Bedded Room to $51.11 Where is the taste of the St. Louis audience? Damme, if I think they ever had any—One of the best—indeed the *very best actor* in the United States playing to empty benches. Well when they get good actors at any risk on our parts—why—it will do them good!!"[83] Yet, for all the iniquity of St. Louis, it did not equal that of Cincinnati, which at one of Placide's appearance paid in only $7.75.[84]

Perhaps if Placide had acted in some of the "good old comedies," there would have been a different story to tell, but of themselves, the pieces already named, except the first, carried little weight, and the rest were no better—*The Village Doctor, Scan Mag,* and *The West End,* even if this last was the work of Boucicault. Yet, if the item in the *Republican* of June 26 is a bona fide criticism and not an effusion of the manager's office, those playgoers who did go were duly impressed. "The best evidence of the power of an actor is the interest and attention which the audience manifest in the play. On this occasion, a perfect silence reigned, and we observed amongst the ladies many a white handkerchief in requisition to dry the starting tear" "For the information of the ladies, who do not wish to be detained late, the management would state that the entertainments will conclude at eleven o'clock."[85]

Placide ended his visit on July 1, and the end of the season was now at hand. I turn to Ludlow's memoirs and his diary for accounts of the closing days and nights. "July 2d, the receipts were $26.75! to a good play and farce [*Jonathan Bradford* and *The Green Eyed Monster*], by a good stock company. The worst house of the season. July 3d, Mrs. Farren's benefit. On the morning of July 4th was our first day-performance,—'Children in the Wood,' and 'Forest of Rosenwald' [the latter advertised as *The Bleeding Nun;*] receipts $66.40. Matinees being a new thing then in the West, some of the company refused to play on this occasion. The performance at night was the 'Declaration of Independence,' 'Rendezvous,' two dances, and 'Life in China.' This night concluded our spring season in St. Louis. July 6th, there was a performance for the benefit of the

[83]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, June 27, 1844.
[84]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 184.
[85]*Missouri Republican,* June 27, 1844.

sufferers by the recent flood, for which most of the company volunteered,—all free, except bills and two attendants: receipts, $67.50. Performance, 'Lady of Lyons,' and 'Of Age To-morrow.' In this latter piece I played *Frederick, Baron Willinghurst,*—a very laborious part. Mr. W. G. Wells volunteered a dance."

AMUSEMENT FOR CHILDREN

Particular Notice to Parents and Guardians

All such as may wish to afford the juvenile portions of their families some amusement on the ever to be remembered FOURTH OF JULY are informed that there will be a day performance at the Theatre, on the above date, commencing at eleven o'clock in the forenoon—lasting about two hours. The pieces are selected with an especial regard to the objects and the occasion. The first part of the amusements is a dramatic version of the pathetic little nursery tale of the *Children in the Woods.* The second part, the thrilling incidents of the famous story of the *Bleeding Nun.*

The prices of admission will be considerably reduced on the occasion.[26]

Ludlow's diary tells us that the scale of prices was: Dress circle, 50 cents; parquet, 30 cents; gallery, 20 cents. Children half price all over the house.

As for the two pieces offered for the delectation of the "juvenile portions," *The Children in the Wood* was from the pen of Thomas Morton with music by Samuel Arnold. Dr. Odell quotes from the *New York Magazine* a comment on a performance at the old Park Theatre in 1794, in which the reviewer states that it "gave us inexpressible delight; we never remember to have experienced such pleasingly painful sensations. . . ."[27] Let us hope that the St. Louis youngsters derived equal pleasure from their pain. As for *The Forest of Rosenwald* or *The Bleeding Nun*—the latter title seems a bit gory for the occasion—Dr. Odell asserts that it calls for "fine scenery and shivery music."[28] However, if the "moppets" of the mid-twentieth century could survive a double feature program composed of *Dracula* and *Frankenstein,* I presume that their ancestors came through the affair unharmed.

[26] *Ibid.,* July 7, 1844.
[27] *Annals,* I, 374.
[28] *Ibid.,* II, 562.

Incidentally, we learn from Ludlow's diary that it was no less a person than Mary Ann Farren who came to his office and declined to participate in this program—"good natured creature! I begin to have a very different opinion of her good nature from that I once entertained." Perhaps there may have been some connection between her refusal and his recent encounter with her husband. On the evening of the third she had her benefit, *Love's Sacrifice* and *The Valet de Sham,* and made only $38.75 above expenses. All in all, she was probably not in the best of spirits as the season ended.

Mrs. Farren, nevertheless, did volunteer for the benefit of the sufferers from the recent flood which had inundated the waterfront and the Mississippi bottoms, playing Pauline to the Claude of Neafie. Eliza Petrie was Ludlow's *vis-à-vis* in *Of Age To-morrow.* Mr. Wells danced his "celebrated" Man of War Hornpipe, and a Mr. Edwards contributed a comic song. The entire proceeds were turned over to Mayor Bernard Pratte, after $5.00 had been deducted to meet the printing bills. This $67.50 was, according to the *Republican* (July 9) the largest contribution to the fund.

In his diary on July 5 Ludlow wrote: "Wound up the Spring Season here, after playing *twelve weeks* in which we paid near $1,500 of our old debts, making debts here & left unpaid for the past season of about $300—leaving a neat profit of at least $1,200." But what does he mean by "debts here & left unpaid"? I think he means that they now owed $1,200 less than before. And how does this gibe with the balance of $33.93 record in the return book? And with Smith's rueful comment in his memoirs that the season was "pursued

'To a dismal and a fatal end;'

that is to say it was fatal to the pockets of the managers, emptying them as effectually as *Macbeth's* daggers emptied the body of *King Duncan* of its blood."[89] As I have said before, the return books have proved baffling, even to an expert accountant. A few items in the columns of figures detailing the expenses may provide at least part of the solution: "Note in favor of G. S. Martin (Mobile) 58.25"; "Draft in favour of D. B. Morehouse 25.91"; "Abijah Fiske's note 100.00"; "T. Placide—on note 25.00"; "Judgment in the case of

[89]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 181.

Chas. Keemle vs. L. & S. $146.00"; "N. M. Ludlow cash to pay debts of firm $200.00." That is, apparently, as was suggested above, old debts were being disposed of, and ate up all the profits. So both partners were right.

If the spring of 1844 had been no happy season of the year for Messrs. Ludlow and Smith, the summer was assuredly little better. Smith returned to Cincinnati where he attempted once more to make a go of it, opening on August 24, but the results were again disappointing, and, besides, he was becoming seriously ill. On September 5, the treasurer of the firm, one Nathaniel Cook, wrote Ludlow that Sol was "quite sick—last night he had a very high feaver, and was more afflicted than he has been since his confinement." He wished his condition kept a secret because of his wife, and besought his partner to let nothing keep him from coming to Cincinnati to take over at a certain unspecified time they had agreed upon. Later, his illness became so desperate that his life was despaired of; he eventually recovered, but the malady, he always believed, permanently affected his health.

Meanwhile Ludlow too had his troubles. On August 13 he found it necessary to have the walls of the Theatre inspected "in consequence of the 'Organ' (Mr. Higgins) stating that the Theatre was to be presented as a nuisance by the property holders in the Neighborhood for fear of the back wall falling—They pronounced the building perfectly safe. Mr. Higgins must recall what he said." So he wrote in his diary that evening. He also suffered intense anxiety because of illness in his own family. The health of his son-in-law, Mat Field, was rapidly declining, and Mrs. Field herself was far from well. On September 3 young Field set out for Boston, whence he was to embark on a long sea voyage, which, it was hoped, would prove beneficial. But he was beyond hope, and died at sea on November 15. Mat Field was a real loss to the theatre. He had, it is true, given up the acting profession for that of journalism, but he was a gifted writer, though not the fine poet his friends fondly believed, and his interest in the stage was sincere and intelligent. Had he lived longer, his name might be far better known than it is to-day. Ludlow, despite his anxieties, managed to carry on, and on

August 26 re-opened the Theatre, which had been "entirely repainted and newly ornamented," with *She Stoops to Conquer* and *The Green Eyed Monster,* to $117.00.[40]

For their fall season, the partners adopted a new policy. Profiting by their unprofitable experiences earlier in the year, they eschewed the costly luxury of stars. The name of not a single one appeared on their playbills throughout the autumn months. Instead, they relied entirely upon their stock company and, for the most part, a more or less standard repertory, although, as matters turned out, the most successful production of the season was an original play by a local author. The total intake for the sixty performances, according to the Return Book, was $6,817.25, the nightly average approximately $113.62. As in the case of the spring season, I do not feel that it is possible to compute with any assurance of correctness the total expenditures, but I do think it is safe to assume that the average expense was under the more or less theoretical $125.00, if, indeed, it had not always been so. Little or no help is to be derived from the authors, since Smith does not even mention the fall season, and Ludlow's contribution is the following sentence: "After paying the company all that was due them, and settling all debts owing to citizens, I engaged passage for myself and family on the steamer Champlain, Capt. Freligh, and left St. Louis for New Orleans on the 8th of November."[41] It is not at all impossible, or even improbable, that these debts were discharged with borrowed funds, for the partners were constantly borrowing from Peter to pay Paul.

Another problem which had to be solved was the lease of the Theatre, their shares in which, of course, the firm no longer owned. It will be recalled that it had been bought by George Collier, and that the managers had been since then paying—when they could—a weekly rental of $100.00. But this arrangement was not permanent. On August 14 Ludlow wrote in his diary: "S. S. said if we could get the St. Louis Theatre finished in the exterior & gas put into the House he would be willing on *his* part that we took a lease for 5 years at $2,500—and advised I would see Collier [illegible] he

[40] *Missouri Republican,* August 24, 1844.
[41] Ludlow: *Dramatic Life,* 608.

would sell the property for & try to get stock raised to purchase it provided we could get it finished as above for in all $25,000 = $2,500 would then pay the stockholders 10 cent on the investment." Sol must have been, despite his periodic attacks of the blues, an incurable optimist. He blew up and then, having got his exasperation out of his system, was soon at least hoping for a change of weather. Nothing, however, came of this scheme, and the Theatre was re-leased for three years at $2,000 a year.

Returning now to the stock company upon which the managers had determined to stake their all, we find that it was in its composition very different from that of the spring. Some of the old timers, while still in the employ of Ludlow and Smith, had been dispatched to Cincinnati, and now formed part of a commonwealth group in that city. A list of those found among Ludlow's papers now in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society includes the following familiar names: Ed. Eddy, J. P. Maynard, Miss Petrie, and Mary Eddy. The Fields, of course, had temporarily retired from the stage. Those who had remained in St. Louis—or, in some instances, returned—were the Farrens, Tom Placide, Mrs. Warren, Dick Russell and his mother, and, of course, the two managers themselves, though neither one was often seen on the stage. Farren no longer occupied the responsible post of stage manager, having been superseded by J. M. Weston, an aspiring actor who had made his debut in Boston (his native city) as Richard III, and was eventually to become the manager of the Chicago Museum. Weston proved, in contrast to his predecessor, to be a thoroughly reliable official.

As for the newcomers, whatever their talents may have been, their names were "writ in water." Most of them it is impossible to identify with any confidence. At the beginning of the season, leading male roles were assigned to a man referred to only as "Mr. Foster"; after the return of Neafie in October, he was promptly demoted to second place. *Foster* is by no means an uncommon name. Ludlow and Smith had had a man of that name (as well as his wife) in their employ in 1838,[42] and a year later Hamblin had one, perhaps the same one, at the Bowery.[43] Perhaps these were one and the same

[42]Carson: *The Theatre on the Frontier*, 218.
[43]Odell: *Annals*, IV, 316.

individual, and perhaps his wife was the same Mrs. Foster of whom Mat Field had written in 1838, ". . . Mrs. Foster couldn't be taught to make one in a standing group for a picture. . . ." Allston Brown says that a Charles J. Foster first appeared at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia in 1846, and died in St. Louis in 1864; possibly this was the man.[44] More likely, however, seems Wm. Miles Foster, who, according to Brown, made his debut under Ludlow's management at Louisville (no date given) and later played at the Franklin in New York. Whoever he was, he certainly was "a small potato," and I pass on to another.

About Miss E. Randolph, who shared the female leads with Mrs. Farren, we can pick up only few data, but they are fairly sure. I quote Brown's contribution: "Born in England. Made her American *debut* in 1840, at the Olympic Theatre, New York. First appeared in Philadelphia, Sept. 13, 1841, at the National, as Jenny Transit in 'Winning a Husband.' Died in 1847."[45] Dr. Odell's information, certainly more dependable, is to the effect that "Miss E. Randolph (aged eleven) appeared as the Youthful Brigand and also as Little Pickle" at the New Chatham in September, 1839. "The child was in great demand at various theatres during this season," he continues, "and must have been attractive."[46] He goes on to say that she had an older sister, and that it is difficult to be sure to which one many contemporary references should apply. If Miss E. Randolph was only eleven in 1839, she was only sixteen when she burst upon the St. Louis public. But, despite her youth and probable immaturity, Ludlow evidently considered her competent, for he used her constantly; and Smith, who had had her with him in Ohio, describes her as a "charming girl and good actress."[47]

Miss Randolph was not the only young girl in the company. There was also one known only as "Miss Sylvia." "This young lady's engagement with us," wrote Ludlow, "was made under peculiar circumstances. She presented herself one morning at the box-office, and requested to see the manager. I was sent for, and on enter-

[44]Brown: *American Stage.*
[45]*Ibid.*
[46]Odell: *Annals,* IV, 376, ff.
[47]Smith: *Theatrical Management,* 184.

ing the office I inquired her business. She said she wanted to act. I asked her what she wanted to act? She replied that she would act any thing. I then asked her what she *had* acted. She replied that she had never acted anything in a regular theatre, but was willing to undertake whatever I would assign to her." Since, as Ludlow said, they never "engaged novices without knowing something of their antecedents," he questioned her and learned that she came from Cincinnati and had a small sister and two small brothers to support. "Her manner was so earnest, and apparently so honest, that I was induced to give her a trial. She opened in the part of *Ernestine,* in which her appearance was so favorable that we engaged her for that line of characters called in theatrical parlance 'walking ladies.' She was with us four or five years, and finally became a 'leading lady' in our theatre."[48] Eventually she also became Mrs. Dick Russell. Of the others involved, Uhl and James S. Wright, I can report nothing worth repeating.

One decision reached by Ludlow was to lay greater stress than before on dancing. To this end, he engaged W. G. Wells, "for one month giving him a certainty of $80 for the month & we take his Benefit."[49] The next night, he wrote, "Mr. Bennie applied for an engagt. offered him a ⅓ Clear Benef. for himself and Miss O. Smith for one month He *declined.*" He may have *declined,* but, be that as it may, both he and *la Belle Oceana* danced merrily away during the fall season. Bennie had been with Ludlow and Smith when they first occupied their present theatre, and had danced night after night between the pieces. As for Wells, he may possibly have been the "Master Wells" who had taken part in the spring season of 1840; at all events, he had volunteered for the closing performance the preceding July, probably to show what he could do. Now for a month St. Louis suffered from no dearth of ballets.

There seems to be little reason for treating this particular season in detail. It was in no way distinguished, neither manager finding it worthy of more than the most perfunctory mention in his memoirs; in fact, Smith ignored it altogether. The analysis of the make-up of

[48]Ludlow, *Dramatic Life,* 608.

[49]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, August 27, 1844.

the company shows its over-all unimportance. Although there were several "first times" in the repertory, with the exception of *Mary Tudor,* which owes such importance as it may boast of to the fact that it was the work of a local writer, the plays were inconsequential. On all sixty bills there was but a single work by Shakespeare, *King Richard III,* which was staged on October 7 with Neafie in the title role. For his benefit Placide offered a travesty on *Othello,* but I doubt if the Bard of Avon would lay claim to that.

Of the novelties, the most worthy of notice was a dramatization of Byron's *Bride of Abydos* which, however new it may have been to St. Louis, was certainly not new to other theatrical centres. Oddly enough, the publicity failed to stress the fact that it was new. The emphasis was, rather, on the elaborate staging. Not put on until October 19, it was announced as *"the closing scenic piece of the season."* "Great care," says the advertisement in the *Republican,* "has been taken in its production, and the outlay has been considerable. The scenery (by Stockwell,) is entirely new, and of the most gorgeous description. The rehearsals have been numerous, and the *whole talent* of the company will be employed in its performance." Neafie, newly returned, assumed the role of Abdallah with Mrs. Farren as Zuleika, Weston as Selim, and Foster as Mirza.

New too were *Asmodeus* or *The Little Devil, The Minerali* or *The Gold Seekers of Anzasca, The Doge of Genoa* or *The Downfall of Tyranny,* otherwise known as *The Bride of Genoa* or *The Genoese,* an unsuccessful early play of Epes Sargeant's, Dance's *Naval Engagements, The Wraith of the Lake,* Douglas Jerrold's *The Hazard of the Die* or *The Reign of Terror, The Student of Gottengen* or *The Demon of the Hartz Mountains, The King and Freebooters* or *The Robbers of Castle Hill,* Payne's *Ali Pacha* or *The Great Struggle for Freedom.*

So much for the record. Not an impressive list; almost all long since deservedly forgotten melodramas. Some of them, while new to St. Louis, were certainly not new in any other sense. There remains, however, one novelty which does call for special mention. This was the *Mary Tudor* or *The Queen and the Artisan* of Edmund Flagg, editor of the *Evening Gazette,* who until the success of the piece was

established was identified merely as "a gentleman of this city."[50] This was introduced on October 9, and enjoyed five repetitions during the remaining weeks of the season. The title role, of course, fell to the lot of Mrs. Farren, with Neafie playing opposite her as Gilbert, the artisan. Prominent in the cast too were Miss Randolph as Emily Talbot, Weston as Fabiani, Foster as Bernard, and Farren as a Jew.

So far as I have been able to tell, except for one or two performances in New Orleans, *Mary Tudor* ended its career in St. Louis, but that it was, relatively speaking, a hit here there can be no question. On September 15 Ludlow had been compelled to go to Cincinnati to replace his ailing partner, and had left "the business arranged for one week, under the care of Mr. Stanley Prompter & Mr. Weston to assist him (money matters under the direction of Mr. A. B. Cook),"[51] and had been absent about a month, Smith, managing to return home in the meantime. On his return, he had a pleasant surprise. "When I arrived in St. Louis, I found the business of the theatre much better than when I left. A new piece had been brought out entitled 'Mary Tudor.' This was a play which had been translated from the French and adapted to the English stage by Mr. Edmund Flagg, a gentleman of St. Louis, who possessed considerable literary acquirements. The piece proved a success, as far as success could be secured with Henry Clay, James K. Polk, and their partisans against it."[52]

Not only the general public, but also the newspaper scribes, were favorably impressed with Mr. Flagg's dramaturgy and also with the performance.

[50]Edmund Flagg (1815-1890), a native of Maine, moved to the West while a young man and in 1837-1838 was reading law in St Louis and writing for the *Daily Commercial Bulletin*. In 1839 he went to Louisville and later to Vicksburg, but in 1844 he returned to St. Louis as editor of the *Evening Gazette*. In addition to *Mary Tudor*, he wrote (or adapted) at least two other plays, *Ruy Blas* and *Catherine Howard* as well as novels and works of other types. 1849 found him in Berlin as secretary to the American Minister to Prussia. Later he served as United States consul at Venice. After his return to this country he took up journalistic work in Washington. *Mary Tudor* had already been given four times at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia as early as 1842. (Wilson: *History of the Philadelphia Stage*, 267)

[51]Diary of N. M. Ludlow, September 15, 1844.

[52]Ludlow: *Dramatic Life*, 607.

A new play, written, or rather translated from the French of VICTOR HUGO, by a gentleman of this city, called *"Mary Tudor,"* was produced on Wednesday evening. The announcement that a play written by a gentleman of the city, and the growing disposition of the community to encourage *home manufactures,* drew together a large and highly respectable audience. The dress circle was graced by many beautiful ladies, and order and decorum prevailed to a much greater extent than usual. All present appeared to have come to give attention to the play and to decide upon its merits. . . .[58]

The correspondent of the *New Era* was at the same time comparatively discerning and critical.

. . . The play is well conceived, and the plot full of incidents—some of which are of thrilling interest. The language throughout is well chosen and adapted to the times which the story is intended to illustrate. And, although the character of the Queen is placed by the Dramatist in a point of view, which history nowhere warrants, there can be little doubt, but that Love, the predominant passion in the heart of every woman, must at some period have inflamed even her harsh and unyielding nature. Mrs. Farren sustained the part with her usual excellence, and in the last act, in the conflict between jealousy, hatred, revenge and despair, rose to the most fearful and impressive personation of passion, we have witnessed for years upon the stage. The thrilling episode of Emily Talbert [*sic*], and the gentle sweetness of her character, contrasting as they do with Mary's turbulent disposition, cannot fail to interest. Miss Randolph touched every heart by the truth and simplicity of her acting. Mr. Farren, Mr. Weston, Mr. Neafie, and indeed all the performers sustained their parts in a highly creditable manner. For a first representation, the piece went off admirably. Still, we think it wants *condensation.* Many of the speeches are too long. The old Turnkey quite wearied us out with his garrulity. But that the play will succeed, there can be no doubt. The serenade behind the scenes, was exquisitely sung! And the Epilogue, by a gentleman of this city, was well suited to the play. It abounds with beautiful thoughts, and was recited by Mrs. Farren with far more effect than could have been expected from her so soon after the exciting scene that closed the play.

At the close of the play, there was a call for the author, which was replied to by Mr. Smith, the manager, introducing him to the audience from the stage box.

[58] *Missouri Republican,* October 11, 1844.

Except for the "novelties" I have listed, the repertoire was made up for the most part of old stand-by's like *The Hunchback, Therese, The Flying Dutchman* (in an elaborate revival), *Ellen Wareham, Damon and Pythias, Rob Roy, William Tell, The Stranger,* and *Lucretia Borgia* in an adaptation by Weston, who used it for his benefit. These are but samples. They drew no overflowing audiences, but seem to have evoked no complaints. "The performances every night at the Theatre are of a very creditable order," wrote the editor of the *New Era* on September 21. "No great stars are paraded to disappoint public expectation, but a good stock company are successfully exerting themselves to amuse the public. To many, the acting of such a company is more satisfactory than the overwrought performances of wandering stars. Messrs. Ludlow & Smith display much judgment and taste in their theatrical management, and prevent and avoid many of the evils that are frequently subjects of complaint in such establishments."

One of the evils, not altogether unnoticed on these pages, was the tendency of some actors to yield to the enticements of Bacchus. They were a hard working, rather ill-paid lot, and probably to that fact can be ascribed a weakness which, as both managers recognized, presented a serious problem. In an effort to control, if not eradicate it, they laid down strict regulations and prescribed heavy penalties, but often, very often, they found it impossible to spare offending members of their corps. This fall, however, one sinned too often, and they were constrained to take drastic action against one of their most valued and popular actors. The day after Ludlow's return to the city, matters reached a crisis. Before he went to bed, the senior partner recorded the event.

Benefit of Mr. Geo. P. Farren $103.50. He got drunk because we would not allow him a five-hours entertainment & at night would not play—We discharge him for this season (remainder).

The discharge:

St. Louis, Oct. 18, '44

Mr. Geo. Farren

Dear Sir/

Your conduct in our theatres, on more than one occasion, has been such as to do us a *very vital injury.* You have set aside our rules in defiance—have trampled on our feelings as men, and as managers—

and we cannot help thinking that this has originated in part, from the supposition that we estimate the services of yourself and wife so highly that we will allow you to do as you please in our theatres rather than separate from you. Permit us to say that you are in error.

We should regret most sincerely to part with Mrs. Farren—yet most likely shall be compelled to do so, unless there is a radical change in *your* habits. Such conduct as we refer to, if persisted in on your part, and allowed by us to pass with impunity, would establish a precedent in our theatres, that must ultimately work out our ruin and that of all connected with us.

We have no doubt that what you have stated in your note to us yesterday, you feel and you think that you will fulfil. But those assurances have been made to us before, and not adhered to—therefore you must pardon us if we are skeptical on this occasion.

We have concluded to do without your services for the *remainder of the season here*—but wish to retain those of your wife—If we find from your deportment hereafter that we can depend upon your proper attention to business, we shall be pleased to have your aid in the coming winter season at New Orleans. We cannot in justice to ourselves and the public—and on the score of example, receive you immediately back into our establishment.

With our best wishes for the happiness and prosperity of yourself and family—and with the desire that you will credit us for candour when we say that this course is painful to us (not to say anything of its inconvenience) and one which nothing but imperious necessity could force us to—we subscribe ourselves

Your sincere friends,
Ludlow & Smith.

This is a long letter to quote in full, but I believe it tells us no little about the two men whose joint signature it bears, the two who were sometimes depicted as cold and grasping individuals. Another epistle, written a day or two later—the actual date is blurred, "Friday—2 [?] Oct."—adds another detail.

Dear Smith

Forgive me but I cannot & will not use the enclosed, damn the checque my heart never has been so heavy as since it has been in my waistcoat pocket—I cannot forgive my own thoughtlessness in the request I do not belong to the herd & for Gods sake dont class me with it. Right I have not to ask you and I feel that the *courtesy* should not have been asked—You must see that I do not immediately bank it & dont wound me by pressing it *I won't use it.* You may

think me impertinent in this but you shant make me miserable. But forgive me if I have offended you & Believe me

Sincerely your Well Wisher & friend

Geo. P. Farren

This incident is mentioned by neither partner in his recollections. George was back in the fold when the company opened in New Orleans, and in it he stayed until, with the blessing of the partners, he and his wife withdrew to travel on their own as stars.

On the evening of November 2, with Ludlow's benefit, *The Ladies' Man, Paul Jones,* and *The New Footman,* and $300.00 in the till, the fall season of 1844 came to an end.

And so does this our record. St. Louis had now concluded the first three decades of its theatrical history, nine of them presided over by Ludlow and Smith, who had for five years been struggling against a financial depression which nearly swamped them. Seven more years lay ahead of the partners before they abandoned St. Louis as a setting for their professional endeavors, though not as a home. But the worst was past. 1845 saw them emerging from the dark days into a happier, more prosperous period. But what lay ahead belongs in the next chapter. This one is closed.

Curtain.

X

EPILOGUE

It seems in the nature of things fitting to close a chronicle of this character with some sort of an analysis or appraisal. What precisely was the status of the drama in St. Louis during the period under examination? Did it demonstrate any improvement either financial or artistic over its achievements during the years which had gone before? The answer must in both cases be a categorical *no*, the second *no* deriving directly from the first. As has been pointed out repeatedly, times were very bad, not only in St. Louis, but all over the country. People had little money to spend, and very little of what they had were they willing to lay out on theatrical entertainment. Managers in their frantic efforts to persuade their fellow citizens to loosen up resorted to every expedient known to the profession, but few proved potent enough to enable their perpetrators to do much more than keep their chins above water, very little above. It was pretty much the same everywhere. Stars, spectacles, ballets, melodramas, magicians, anything and everything were tried and found wanting. And they all cost money, especially the stars, who charged enormous percentages, often consuming most of the profits, if not indeed all of them, and greatly weakening the prestige and drawing-powers of the regular company.

In my analysis I have been handicapped, not only by the incompleteness of the records, but also by the penchant of the managers, in this case perhaps only Ludlow, since Smith denounces the custom, for juggling the titles of some of the plays, especially the farces.[1] Therefore, it is not at all impossible that some of the plays listed hereafter masquerade under aliases which I have not penetrated, and that there are unrecognized duplications. I have tried to weed out mere *pas*, recitations, and feats of all kinds, and to catalogue only legitimate dramas, afterpieces, operas, and operatic ballets.

Adopting this criterion, I have counted 425 different pieces performed during the five seasons I have covered. Between the familiar and the novel, about two hundred having been presented in previous

[1]Smith: *Theatrical Management*, 265.

years, and a few more being, so far as I can determine, novelties, I hesitate to be exact. Only one, the ballet-opera of *La Bayadère*, reached fifteen performances, with *Cherry and Fair Star* and *The Lady of Lyons* the runners-up with twelve each. Six—*London Assurance, The Conquering Game, The Married Rake, Is She a Woman?, The School for Scandal* and *The Loan of a Lover*—chalked up a score of eleven; and two—*King Richard III* and *Mr. and Mrs. Peter White*—ten. The record for a single season was captured by *Cherry and Fair Star* with eleven evenings—or part-evenings—to its credit; but it was seen during only one other year of the five. *London Assurance* was given nine times in the spring season of 1842, and only twice more.

Turning now to the authors represented, we find that Shakespeare could boast of forty-five performances of fourteen plays—six tragedies, six comedies, and two histories. *King Richard III* led all the rest with a tally of ten, *The Merchant of Venice* coming next with six. (I am including *Catharine and Petruchio* in the Shakespeare category.) Of the non-Shakespearean plays sometimes seen to-day outside the laboratory, *The School for Scandal* proved by far the most popular with, as I have said, eleven productions. Then came *She Stoops to Conquer*, with five, while *The Rivals* limped after with three. Two other so-called "classics," *Venice Preserved* and *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, were given five times each.

Many of the plays were of American authorship, *Tortesa the Usurer*, by N. P. Willis, being far out front with eight performances. Several works from the pens of local authors were tried out, but only Flagg's *Mary Tudor* achieved a positive success.

Dominated as it is by melodramas and trivialities, this is not a very impressive showing, and reflects little credit on the taste of the St. Louis audiences of the early '40's. Yet perhaps it might not hurt us to wonder how some of our favorites will impress readers a century hence.

So much for the plays which made up the repertoire. As for the manner in which they were produced, this must be guessed at on the basis of incomplete, but none the less significant evidence. It is too bad that it occurred to no one to set down in explicit detail just *how* things were done. Nevertheless, as I said, there are many bits of

evidence which can be put together, and so enable us to-day to draw some reasonably safe conclusions.

The Ludlow and Smith company, changing in make-up as it did from season to season, probably maintained a fairly consistent level of competence. No little of its strength undoubtedly derived from the almost constant presence of Mrs. Farren, who, if not an actress of the highest rank, was assuredly a very able as well as a most conscientious one, and was so recognized in the principal theatres of the country for many years to come. In both her public and her private life she conducted herself with a quiet dignity which won her the respect and affection of the community. Without her, the managers would have found their stony path much stonier than it was. Conner and Neafie too were capable actors, and when they were on deck, a certain stability in their departments could be counted on; if not sensational, they were everywhere accepted as more than adequate. For male character roles there was always Farren, at least when he was in a condition to be used; certainly no masculine counterpart of his literally better half, but thoroughly routined and master of all the tricks of his trade; furthermore, his spirit was usually willing even if his flesh was too often weak. Of course, Old Joe Cowell and Tom Placide were excellent in their respective "lines"; the trouble was that they were members of the company for only short periods. As for the character women, Mrs. Russell was a fixture. I am sure that, like her daughter, she was a very good woman; I am not so sure that her art was on a par with her virtue. But she seems to have been sufficient unto the day or, rather, the evening. The merits and demerits of most of the transients it is just about impossible to appraise. They came and they went, and most of them have been long since forgotten. When affiliated with other establishments, they for the most part occupied practically the same positions they did in St. Louis; so I take it that the standards of the St. Louis house were approximately the same as those elsewhere.

In so far as stars were concerned, St. Louis, because of its remote location, could not hope to be visited in those days of uncomfortable, if not actually dangerous, travel conditions, by the multiplicity of celebrities who could shuttle back and forth in comparative luxury between New York and Philadelphia. Thanks to their strategic

situations, these two centres were able to enjoy all there was of the best. But except for them, the contrast with St. Louis was not as great as might be expected. For instance, Boston, Charleston, and New Orleans did not fare very much better. They saw practically all, if not all, the luminaries St. Louis did, and in each case a few it did not, but in no case a very great many.

The most important star seen by all three of these and missed by St. Louis was Fanny Elssler, the world-famous *danseuse* and the greatest theatrical sensation to tour this country before the advent of Jenny Lind. No doubt, the Missourians deplored their loss, as well they might. In addition to her, Boston enjoyed Charles Kean, H. J. Finn, Tyrone Power, both Vandenhoffs (John, the father, and George, the son), Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wallack, Josephine Clifton, and John Braham. Of these, Power and Miss Clifton penetrated the Deep South, playing at Charleston, as did also "Jim Crow" (T. D.) Rice, James W. Wallack the Elder, and Junius Brutus Booth. George Vandenhoff got as far as New Orleans, and so did the younger Wallack, William E. Burton, James W. Anderson, and Mrs. Jane M. Vernon. In this list there are, of course, several names of outstanding importance, notably Booth's, but not as many as one might have anticipated.[2]

As managers I believe that Ludlow and Smith were as painstaking and efficient as most of their confrères. Their standards were high, and they did what they could to live up to them. They had drawn up and posted in their theatres a model set of regulations for the government of their employees. These they endeavored to enforce, but circumstances frequently tied their hands and compelled them to overlook irritating violations, something I am sure neither of them liked to do. But satisfactory actors were not to be found under every bush in St. Louis, and the play must go on.

We have seen that the chief weaknesses inveighed against by the local critics were occasional unfamiliarity with lines, and lassitude and inattention to detail on the part of the lesser members of the company. Of the first of these faults the St. Louis Theatre certainly had no monopoly. One has only to browse through the memoirs and the

[2]This information is drawn from: Clapp: *A Record of the Boston Stage;* Hoole: *The Ante-Bellum Charleston Theatre;* and Smither: *A History of the English Theatre at New Orleans.*

correspondence of the members of the profession to have this point driven home. Thomas Abthorpe Cooper, for instance, who had ended a career of forty years as one of the outstanding stars on the American stage two years before this chronicle begins, was almost always "imperfect." In fact, someone complained that he had to hear Cooper's roles through twice in one evening, once from the lips of the prompter and then from those of the star. Macready's diaries teem with imprecations called down on the heads of offenders on almost every stage he trod. So the St. Louis actors were by no means the only offenders. On the other hand, I have come across few references to mishaps due to negligence like those reported in volume after volume of the recollections.

Before we condemn the long-dead actors and actresses for their lapses, let us pause a moment to consider what they were asked to do. They were supposed, for one thing, to keep somewhere in their minds the words of almost innumerable roles in tragedies, comedies, melodramas, farces, and musical pieces ready for use often on a few hours' notice. There was a change of bill almost every night, and it was taken as a matter of course that they might be called on to perform in both pieces. Significant items may be found in the selections from the diaries of Mat Field published in the *Bulletin* of the Missouri Historical Society (January and April, 1949). For instance, at ten o'clock on the evening of April 8, 1839, after playing his part in *Rob Roy* and retiring to his bed on the carpenter's gallery, he jotted down, "I must read *Charles 2nd* for tomorrow." And on April 20: "We play *Ion* tonight. My part is *Adrastus* . . . I gave *Adrastus* a reading last night, and now can sit here writing at my ease until I hear the *call boy's* voice summon my character, when I go down, rehearse my scene, and come up again to my writing." (In my copy Adrastus speaks some 430 lines or part-lines of blank verse, about one hundred of which have been cut for production. I do not know whose copy this was, but, inasmuch as it prints the cast of a performance in 1859, it obviously was not Field's.)

Under the repertoire system then in vogue adequate rehearsals were simply out of the question except in the case of important novelties. Fortunately most of the roles were relatively brief, but, even so, slips of memory were inevitable, even Shakespeare's texts

sometimes suffering mayhem, occasionally at the hands of major stars. Often the actors knew little or nothing of a play in which they were appearing beyond the scenes in which they themselves took part.

As for teamwork, that must have been "a consummation devoutly to be wish'd." We saw how delighted Ludlow was with Buckstone and Mrs. Fitzwilliam, and the close integration their repeated appearances together in the same roles had achieved. True, certain players had monopolies on a few characters, and, I presume, worked them out with some thoroughness. (Mrs. Farren and Mrs. Russell must have acted Pauline and her mother in *The Lady of Lyons* together innumerable times.) But what happened when a stranger with ideas of his own and the prestige to enforce them arrived on the stage? Forrest and Macready both played Othello and Richelieu on the St. Louis stage during the spring season of 1844, but I should be very much surprised indeed if their stage business was identical and they were to be found on the same spots at the same lines. So tenacious was the latter of his routine that he sometimes terrified his supporting actors to such a degree that they went so far as to "mark the spot" with chalk, and then went about the stage with downcast eyes fearful lest they miss it by a few inches. Woe betide them if they forgot, or if, as sometimes happened, the megalomaniac star did so himself. On the other hand, when a subordinate inquired of another celebrity where he wished him to be at a given moment, the surprising answer was, "Oh, wherever you want. If you're on the stage, I'll find you." So the members of the resident company must have had to adapt themselves to the vagaries of any and all comers, and be ready to execute quick changes.

So far as I have been able to find out, the visiting stars did when in St. Louis attend such rehearsals as were held of the pieces in which they were displayed. But such was by no means the universal practice. Sometimes they sent emissaries, or else summoned one or two of their *vis-à-vis* to their hotels to receive their instructions, as Mrs. Siddons did Macready when he was a youthful tyro trembling at the thought of playing opposite the "Tragic Muse." The late Otis Skinner once informed me that as late as 1880, "I played a

short season with Edwin Booth and never saw him until he came on the stage for the night's performance!"

About the scenery I must draw my conclusions from current practices. The garish newspaper publicity cannot be depended on. It is dazzling and vague. Never is there vouchsafed us any explanation of the means by which the vaunted miracles were effected. Nor is there more than an occasional hint in the correspondence or even the account books of the managers, though in a return book for 1844 I have found "Sheet iron for Thunder 1 55." Undoubtedly the old-fashioned wing-sets with the flats projecting from the sides parallel to the footlights were employed.[3] The box set had been introduced elsewhere, but I have found no indication of its use on Third and Olive. I suspect that drops were sometimes employed, but cannot produce definitive evidence. Of course, there were not special sets for different plays except particularly important novelties. The cost would have been prohibitive, and where would storage space have been found? Like other theatres, the St. Louis had its collection of standard sets, a palace exterior, a palace interior, a cottage exterior, a cottage interior, a street, a wood, and so on. These were dragged out night after night for play after play until the audience must have grown heartily sick of them, or they became indecently shabby. There was always—or almost always—a "scenic artist" on hand, and he must have been kept busy repairing and repainting as well as supplying such new sets as were demanded. These may have been in some cases very effective in the 1840's, though I am definitely suspicious that the raptures in the press were bought and paid for. To-day they would doubtless present rather sorry pictures, but then they had no electric lights to show up all the flaws. There was not as yet in St. Louis (I believe) even gas,

[3]The author has in his possession a copy of *The Bridal*, Sheridan Knowles' revision of *The Maid's Tragedy* by Beaumont and Fletcher, on the first page of which is written in ink: "Marked according to *Mr. Macready's Prompt Book* By H. J. Conway for Ludlow & Smith." (The "Ludlow & Smith" is apparently in another handwriting.) In the stage directions written in are a number of references to "grooves." The stages of almost all theatres had for years been traversed by these greased slots in which it was the custom to slide the flats from the wings out onto the stage. Of course this is no proof that there were any in the floor of the stage of the St. Louis Theatre, but it does at least suggest the possibility. Conway was, according to Ludlow (*Dramatic Life*, 630), stage manager for Ludlow and Smith's southern theatres in 1845.

only oil.[4] Except for a special number like *London Assurance* the properties must, according to our standards, have left a great deal to be desired, and certainly no stress was laid on appropriateness. How could there be with twelve or more plays a week? The same old chairs, tables, and sofas must have been worked as hard as the familiar sets.

One might surmise that the audiences were rougher and less sophisticated than those in the Eastern cities. That conditions "out front" left a great deal to be desired certainly cannot be gainsaid. A great proportion of the spectators was made up of "river men" and Western emigrants many of whom were uncouth, and the decorum was not that demanded and enforced by reputable managements to-day. Yet I have never come across any reference to a riot of the kind which was by no means unknown in the cities along the Atlantic coast, where the uproar in the house was occasionally so great that the actors had perforce to go through their parts in dumb show and were sometimes pelted with decayed vegetables. A frightful culmination was reached in New York on May 10, 1849, when the militia fired on a mob seeking to attack Macready, and twenty-two persons paid with their lives for a senseless feud between two actors.

Records show that St. Louis was even then a city of conservative tastes and that its life was dominated by men and women of culture and breeding. The French were fading out, but not without leaving enduring evidences of their fine qualities. The Germans, with their love of music and the drama, were coming in. Into the city was pouring also a stream of native-born Americans from New England and from the Southern states, and they did not change their tastes or their manners when they arrived. So, despite the vast distances which separated it from the centres of population along the Atlantic

[4]There is a baffling conflict in the evidence concerning gas In his diary Ludlow made the following entry on August 14, 1844: "S. S said if we could get the St Louis Theatre finished in the exterior & gas put into the House he would be willing on *his* part that we took a lease for 5 years at $2500. . . ." Yet in the Return Book for the same period there is entry after entry noting the payment of the gas bill. What are we to believe? Possibly the answer is that gas was somehow employed for exterior illumination, but had not yet been introduced "into the House."

seaboard, St. Louis was by this time pretty much a typical American city. It liked the same things—on the stage and off—as did the others.

Theatrically it was the capital of the upper Mississippi Valley, and was so to remain as long as Ludlow and Smith were at the helm. When the time came for them to relinquish their hold, other theatres were springing up within a few blocks of Third and Olive, but other cities were growing up to challenge the supremacy of St. Louis. By 1851 the picture had changed. With the departure of the old masters, St. Louis ceased to be the capital.

APPENDIX

RECORDS OF PERFORMANCES OF INDIVIDUAL PLAYS

1840

Affair of Honor, An, 1.
Alexander the Great, 1.
Alice, 1.
Ambrose Gwinett, 2.
Animal Magnetism, 4
Apostate, The, 1.
Bachelor's Buttons, 1.
Bayadère, La, 7.
Belle's Stratagem, The, 1.
Black Eyed Susan, 2.
Blue Devils, 3.
Bombastes Furioso, 1.
Born to Good Luck, 1.
Bottle Imp, The, 5
Brigand, The, 2.
Broken Sword, The, 1.
Brutus, 1.
Captain Kyd, 3.
Captive, The, 1.
Catharine and Petruchio, 2
Catherine Howard, 1
Charcoal Sketches, 2.
Charles II, 1.
Cherry and Fair Star, 1.
Cinderella, 1.
Comedy of Errors, The, 1.
Conancheotah, 1.
Conquering Game, The, 7.
Coriolanus, 1.
Crossing the Line, 1.
Crowded Houses, 1.
Damon and Pythias (Banim), 1.
Day after the Wedding, The, 1.
Day in Paris, A, 1.
Dead Shot, The, 3.
Denouncer, The (The Seven Clerks), 2.
Dew Drop, The (La Sylphide), 7.
Dramatist, The, 1.
Dumb Belle, The, 2
El Hyder, 2.
Englishman in India, The, 2.
Family Jars, 2.
Floating Beacon, The, 1.
Flora and Zephyr, 3.
Forest Rose, The, 1.
Forty and Fifty, 2.
Forty Thieves, The, 1.
Foundling of the Forest, The, 1.
Four Lovers, The, 2.
Gamecock of the Wilderness, The, 3.
Gilderoy, 1.
Glencoe, 2
Golden Farmer, The, 1.
Green Eyed Monster, The, 3.
Guy Mannering, 1.
Hamlet, 2.
High, Low, Jack, and the Game, 2.
Hofer, 1.
Honest Thieves, 1.
Hunchback, The, 2.
Hundred Pound Note, The, 2.
Hunting a Turtle, 1.
Husband at Sight, A, 2
Ice Witch, The, 2
Idiot Witness, The, 2.
Invincibles, The, 2.
Irish Lion, The, 3.
Irishman in London, The, 1.
Irish Tutor, The, 2.
Iron Chest, The, 1.
Is He Jealous?, 2.
Jewess, The, 1.
Jonathan in England, 1.
Kill or Cure, 3.
King Lear, 1
King Richard III, 3.
Ladder of Love, The, 1.
Lady and the Devil, The, 2.
Lady of Lyons, The, 5.
Lady of the Lake, The, 2.
La Fitte, 1.
Laugh When You Can, 3.
Liar, The, 3.
Loan of a Lover, The, 4.
Lottery Ticket, The, 1.
Love, 5.
Love Chase, The, 2.
Love in a Village, 1.
Love in Humble Life, 1.
Lovers' Quarrels, 3.
Luke the Laborer, 1.
Lying Valet, The, 3.
Macbeth, 1.
Maidens Beware! 1.
Marco Bombs, 3.
Married Life, 1.
Married Rake, The, 4.

Masaniello (The Dumb Girl of Portici), 4.
Masked Ball, The, 3.
Mazeppa, 3.
Merchant of Venice, The, 1.
Middy Ashore, The, 2.
Midnight Hour, The, 2.
Miller's Maid, The, 1.
Mischief Making, 2.
Mountain Devil, The, 2.
Mountaineers, The, 2.
Mr. and Mrs. Peter White, 2.
Mr. H., 2.
Mummy, The, 2.
My Friend and My Wife, 1.
My Friend, the Governor, 2.
My Neighbor's Wife, 1.
My Young Wife and My Old Umbrella, 3.
Nature and Philosophy, 2.
New Way to Pay Old Debts, A, 2
Nicholas Nickleby, 2.
No Song, No Supper, 2.
Octavia Brigaldi, 1.
Of Age To-morrow, 1.
Old King Cole, 1.
Oliver Twist, 2.
Othello, 1.
Parole of Honour, The, 3.
Paul Jones, 5.
Perfection, 4.
Personation, 2
Pizarro, 1.
Policy Better than Pistols, 1.
Politician, The, 1.
Poor Gentleman, The, 1.
Poor Soldier, The, 1.
Promissory Note, The, 2.
Raising the Wind, 1.
Reform, 3.
Rendezvous, The, 3
Review, The, 4.
Richelieu, 4.
Rip Van Winkle, 1.
Robber's Wife, The, 1.
Robert Macaire, 2.
Rob Roy, 1.
Roland for an Oliver, A, 3.
Romeo and Juliet, 2.
Rosina, 1.
St. Patrick's Day, 1.
Sam Patch in France, 2.
Scapegoat, The, 2.
School for Scandal, The, 3.
Sea Captain, The, 2.
Secret, The, 2.
She Stoops to Conquer, 1.
Simpson & Co., 3.
Spectre Bridegroom, The, 2.
Spirit of the Clyde, The, 2.
Sprigs of Laurel (The Rival Soldiers), 3
Stranger, The, 2.
Sweethearts and Wives, 3.
Swiss Cottage, The, 1.
Sylvester Daggerwood, 1.
Therese, 2.
33 John Street, 1.
Three Weeks after Marriage, 1.
Times that Tried Us, 1.
Timour the Tartar, 1.
'Tis All a Farce, 1.
Tom and Jerry, 2.
Tom Cringle's Log, 2.
Tortesa the Usurer, 4.
Tour de Nesle, La, 2.
Tradesman, The, 1
Turn Out, 1
Turnpike Gate, The, 1.
Two Friends, The, 1.
Two Gregories, The, 1.
Two Thompsons, The, 2.
Uncle John, 1.
Venice Preserved, 1.
Vermonter, The, 2
Victorine, 1
Virginius, 1.
Vision of the Dead, The, 1.
Warlock of the Glen, The, 2.
Ways and Means, 2.
Weathercock, The, 1.
Widow's Victim, The, 1.
William Tell, 3.
Will Watch, the Bold Smuggler, 1
Wrecker's Daughter, The, 1
Yankee in Time, The, 1
Youthful Queen, The, 1.

1841

Adrian and Orilla, 1.
Advertising for a Wife, 2.
Alice, 1.
All the World's a Stage, 2.
Ambrose Gwinett, 1.
Assignation, 2.
Banished Star, The, 1.
Barrack Room, The, 1.
Bath Road Inn, The, 1.
Belle's Stratagem, The, 1.
Be Quiet, 1.
Bibboo, 3.

Black Eyed Susan, 1.
Blue Devils, 3
Bombastes Furioso, 1.
Brigand, The, 1
Broken Sword, The, 2.
Castle Spectre, The, 4.
Caverte, The, 2.
Cherry and Fair Star, 11.
Christening, The, 1
Clari, 1.
Cobbler's Daughter, The, 1.
Conquering Game, The, 1.
Conscript, The, 1.
Country Girl, The, 1.
Damon and Pythias (farce), 1.
Day after the Wedding, The, 3.
Dead Shot, The, 2.
Demon Dwarf, The, 1.
Douglas, 4.
Dumb Belle, The, 2.
Dumb Girl of Genoa, The, 4
Englishman in India, The, 1.
Evil Eye, The, 1.
Falls of Clyde, The, 3.
Family Jars, 1.
Floating Beacon, The, 1.
Foreign Airs and Native Graces, 3.
Forest of Rosenwald, The, 1
Forest Rose, The, 1.
Frightened to Death, 4.
Gamecock of the Wilderness, The, 2.
Gentleman in Difficulties, A, 1.
George Barnwell, 1.
Gnome Fly, The, 2.
Guy Mannering, 2.
Haunted Inn, The, 2.
Heir at Law, The, 1.
His Last Legs, 4.
Honey Moon, The, 1
Hunter of the Alps, The, 2.
Hypocrite, The, 1.
Intrigue, 2.
Introduce Me, 2.
Irish Attorney, The, 1.
Irish Widow, The, 2.
Iron Chest, The, 1.
Is He Jealous? 2.
Is She a Woman? 4.
Jacques Strop, 2.
John de Procida, 1.
Kentuckian, The, 1.
Kill or Cure, 3.
King Henry IV, Part 1, 1.
King Richard III, 1.
Kiss in the Dark, A, 1.
Lady and the Devil, The, 1.
Lady of Lyons, The, 1.
Last Days of Pompeii, The, 7.
Liar, The, 2.
Libertines Deceived, 1.
Loan of a Lover, The 1.
Love in Humble Life, 1.
Lovers' Quarrels, 5.
Lucille, 1.
Luke the Laborer, 1.
Lying Valet, The, 1
Mdlle. de Belle Isle, 2.
Maid of Croissy, The, 2.
Manager's Daughter, The, 3.
Married Life, 1.
Married Yesterday, 3.
Masquerade Ball, The, 1.
Merchant of Venice, The, 3.
Merry Loafer, The, 1.
Merry Wives of Windsor, The, 1.
Militia Training, 1.
Mischief Making, 1
Money, 3.
Monsieur Mallet, 3
Monsieur Tonson, 1.
Mr. and Mrs. Peter White, 2.
Mummy, The, 1.
My Aunt, 1.
My Country Cousin, 2.
My Fellow Clerk, 3.
My Little Adopted, 2.
My Sister Kate, 2.
My Young Wife and My Old Umbrella, 2.
Nabob for an Hour, A, 2.
New Way to Pay Old Debts, A, 1.
No Song, No Supper, 1.
Of Age To-morrow, 1.
Old and Young, 1.
Old English Gentleman, The, 2.
Out of Place, 2.
Painter's Daughter, The, 1.
Perfection, 2.
Peter Punctilio, 2.
Pizarro, 1.
Poor Soldier, The, 2.
Promissory Note, The, 1.
Quasimodo, 2.
Raising the Wind, 1.
Rendezvous, The, 2.
Rip Van Winkle, 1.
Road to Ruin, The, 1.
Robber's Wife, The, 4.
Robert Macaire, 3.
St. Patrick's Day, 1.
Sam Patch in France, 2.
Schindereller, 4.
School for Scandal, The, 2.

Snapping Turtles, 2.
Soldier's Daughter, The, 1.
Solomon Swop, 1.
Spectre Bridegroom, The, 1.
Speed the Plough, 1.
Sprigs of Laurel, 3.
Stranger, The, 1.
Swiss Cottage, The, 1.
Swiss Swains, The, 4.
Therese, 1.
33 John Street, 1.
Three and the Deuce, The, 1.
Times that Tried Us, 1.
'Tis She, 6.
Tom Cringle's Log, 1.
Tom Noddy's Secret, 1.
Turn Out, 1.
Two Friends, The, 1.
Two Gregories, The, 2.
Venice Preserved, 4.
Vermonter, The, 1.
Ways and Means, 1.
Way to Get Married, The, 1.
Wedding Day, The, 1.
Widow Wiggins, The, 4.
Wild Oats, 1
Woodman's Hut, The, 1.
Yankee in Time, The, 2

1842

Adelgitha, 1.
Alive and Merry, 1.
All the World's a Stage, 1.
Apostate, The, 1
Avenger, The, 2.
Barrack Room, The, 1.
Belle's Stratagem, The, 1.
Berilda, 2.
Black Eyed Susan, 3.
Blind Boy, The, 3.
Blue Beard, 2.
Blue Devils, 1.
Captive, The, 2.
Carpenter of Rouen, The, 5.
Castle Spectre, The, 2
Catharine and Petruchio, 1.
Charles II, 2.
Children in the Wood, The, 3.
Clari, 1.
Conquering Game, The, 2
Critic, The, 1.
Damon and Pythias (Banim), 3.
Day after the Wedding, The, 1
Dead Shot, The, 2.
Dramatist, The, 1.
Dream at Sea, The, 3.
Englishman in India, The, 2.
Filial Love, 1.
Forest of Rosenwald, The, 1.
Forest Rose, The, 1.
Forty and Fifty, 2.
Forty Thieves, The, 4.
Foundling of the Forest, The, 5.
Gambler's Fate, The, 2.
Gamecock of the Wilderness, The, 1.
Green Eyed Monster, The, 1
Gustavus III (The Masked Ball), 4.
Guy Mannering, 1.
Heir at Law, The, 1.
His Last Legs, 1.
Honest Thieves, 1
How to Rule a Husband, 1.
Hunchback, The, 2.
Hunter of the Alps, The, 3.
Hunting a Turtle, 2.
Hypocrite, The, 1.
Irish Tutor, The, 3.
Is He Jealous? 2
Is She a Woman? 4.
John Bull, 1.
Jonathan in England, 1.
King Lear, 1.
King Richard III, 2.
Ladder of Love, The, 1.
Lady of Lyons, The, 4.
Lady of the Lake, The, 3
Laugh When You Can, 1.
Lear of Private Life, The, 2.
Liar, The, 2.
Like Master, Like Man, 1.
Loan of a Lover, The, 4.
London Assurance, 9.
Lucille, 2.
Luke the Laborer, 1.
Lying Valet, The, 1.
Macbeth, 1
Maid and the Magpie, The, 1.
Married Rake, The, 2.
Masaniello, 2.
Merchant of Venice, The, 1.
Middy Ashore, The, 3.
Money, 2.
Mort de César, La, 1.
Mummy, The, 2.
My Fellow Clerk, 1.
My Friend, the Governor, 2.
My Neighbor's Wife, 3.
My Sister Kate, 1.
Nature and Philosophy, 1.
New Way to Pay Old Debts, A, 1.

Nick of the Woods, 2
No! 5.
No Song, No Supper, 2.
Of Age To-morrow, 3.
Omnibus, The, 3.
102, 1.
Orphan and the Murderer, The, 1.
Othello, 1.
Perfection, 2.
Pizarro, 1.
Point of Honor, A, 2
Poor Soldier, The, 3.
Promissory Note, The, 2.
Raising the Wind, 2.
Ransom, The, 2.
Rendezvous, The, 2.
Rent Day, The, 3.
Review, The, 1.
Richelieu, 1.
Rifle Brigade, The, 1.
Rivals, The, 1
Road to Ruin, The, 2
Robber's Wife, The, 2.
Roland for an Oliver, A, 1.
Romeo and Juliet, 1.
Sam Patch in France, 1.
School for Scandal, The, 4.
Secret, The, 1
Sentinel, The, 1.
She Stoops to Conquer, 3.
Simpson & Co., 1.
Six Degrees of Crime, The, 3
Soldier's Daughter, The, 1.
Somnambulist, The, 2.
Sprigs of Laurel, 2.
Stranger, The, 2.
Sweethearts and Wives, 1.
Tekeli, 2.
Three Weeks after Marriage, 4.
Timour the Tartar, 1.
'Tis All a Farce, 1.
Tom Cringle, 1
Tortesa the Usurer, 4.
Tour de Nesle, La, 2.
Town and Country, 1.
Turn Out, 2.
Two Friends, The, 1.
Two Gregories, The, 1.
Valet de Sham, The, 3.
Vermonter, The, 1.
Victorine, 2.
Virginius, 1.
Ways and Means, 1.
Warlock of the Glen, The, 1.
Weathercock, The, 1.
Wedding, The, 1
Wedding Ring, The, 2.
West Indian, The, 1.
Widow's Victim, The, 3.
Wife, The, 1.
Wild Oats, 1.
Wives as They Were, 2.
Yankee in Time, The, 1.
Yankee Land, 2
Young Widow, The, 1.
Youthful Queen, The, 2.

1843

Actress of All Work, The, 1.
Alive and Merry, 2
All the World's a Stage, 1.
Apostate, The, 1.
Artful Dodger, The, 2.
As You Like It, 1.
Bayadère, La, 8.
Belle's Stratagem, The, 1.
Black Eyed Susan, 2.
Boots at the Swan, 1
Born to Good Luck, 2.
Boston Tea Party, The, 1.
Brigand, The, 1.
Bumps, 1.
Buy-It-Dear, 1.
Carpenter of Rouen, The, 1
Children in the Wood, The, 1.
Cinderella, 1.
Crossing the Line, 1.
Damon and Pythias (Banim), 1.
Dead Shot, The, 1.
Dramatist, The, 1.
Dumb Belle, The, 2.
Dumb Girl of Genoa, The, 1.
Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady, 1.
Fall of the Alamo, The, 1.
Female Husband, The, 1
Forest Rose, The, 2.
French Spy, The, 1.
Gazza Ladra, La (The Maid and the Magpie), 1.
Guy Mannering, 1.
Heir at Law, The, 1.
His Last Legs, 3.
Honey Moon, The, 2.
How to Pay the Rent, 1.
Hunchback, The, 2
Hunting a Turtle, 1.
Husband at Sight, A, 1.
Hypocrite, The, 1.
Idiot Witness, The, 1.

Irish Admiral, The, 1.
Irish Ambassador, The, 1.
Irish Lion, The, 3.
Irish Tutor, The, 1.
Iron Chest, The, 1.
Is She a Woman? 1.
Jackets of Blue, 1.
Jacques Strop, 1.
John Bull, 1.
John Jones, 1.
King Lear, 1.
King Richard III, 2.
A Lady and a Gentleman, etc, 2.
Lady of Lyons, The, 1.
Laugh When You Can, 1.
London Assurance, 2.
Loan of a Lover, The, 1.
Love and Reason, 1.
Love Chase, The, 2.
Love in Humble Life, 1.
Lucille, 1.
Man and Wife, 1.
Maniac Lover, The, 2.
Marriage of Figaro, The, 1.
Married Life, 1.
Married Rake, The, 5.
Middy Ashore, The, 1.
Miller's Maid, The, 1.
Mr. and Mrs. Peter White, 2.
My Aunt, 1.
My Neighbor's Wife, 1.
Nervous Man, The, 1.
New Way to Pay Old Debts, A, 1.
Night Owl, The, 4.
Olympic Revels, 1
Omnibus, The, 1.
One Hour, 1.
102, 1.
Our Irish Friend, 1.
Perfection, 1.
Pirate Dey, The, 2.
Plains of Chippewa, The, 3.
Pleasant Neighbor, A, 2.
Postillion of Longjumeau, The, 3.
Promissory Note, The, 1.
Redwood, 2.
Review, The, 1.
Rivals, The, 2.
Road to Ruin, The, 1.
Robert Macaire, 2.
Rob Roy, 1.
Roland for an Oliver, A, 1.
Rory O'More, 1.
St. Patrick's Eve, 1.
Sam Patch in France, 1.
School for Scandal, The, 2.
She Stoops to Conquer, 1.
Simpson & Co., 1.
Six Degrees of Crime, The, 2.
Soldier's Daughter, The, 1.
Somnambula, La, 2.
Speculation, 1.
Speed the Plough, 1.
Swiss Cottage, The, 1.
Sylphide, La (The Dew Drop), 1.
Teddy the Tiler, 1.
Times that Tried Us, 1.
Turning the Tables, 2.
'Twas I, 1.
Two Drovers, The, 2.
Two Friends, The, 1.
Two Gregories, The, 1.
Vermonter, The, 1.
Wandering Boys, The, 2.
Wedding Ring, The, 2.
Welsh Girl, The, 1.
William Tell, 1.
Wonder: A Woman Keeps a Secret, 2.
Yankee at Niagara, The, 1.
Yankee in Time, The, 1
Yankee Land, 1.
Young Widow, The, 1.
Youthful Queen, The, 2.

1844

Aethiop, The, 3.
Ali Pacha, 2.
Alive and Merry, 1.
Artful Dodger, The, 3.
Asmodeus, 3.
Attic Story, The, 2.
Bears Not Beasts, 1.
Beichte, Die, 1.
Boots at the Swan, 2.
Bride of Abydos, The, 5.
Chaos is Come Again, 2.
Children in the Wood, The, 2.
Conquering Game, The, 1.
Critic, The, 1.
Day after the Wedding, The, 2.
Dead Shot, The, 1.
Death Token, The, 2.
Declaration of Independence, The, 1.
Denouncer, The, 2.
Doge of Genoa, The, 2.
Double Bedded Room, The, 1.
Duel, The, 2.
Dumb Belle, The, 1.
Ellen Wareham, 1.

Englishman in India, The, 2.
Father and Daughter (Seduction), 1.
Feast of the Lanterns (Life in China), 2.
Flying Dutchman, The, 6.
Forest of Rosenwald, The, 2.
Fortune's Frolic, 3.
Gabrielle, 2.
Gambler's Fate, The, 2.
Ghost in Spite of Himself, A, 1.
Gladiator, The, 1.
Golden Farmer, The, 5
Grandfather Whitehead, 3.
Green Eyed Monster, The, 3.
Guy Mannering, 3.
Hamlet, 1.
Handsome Husband, The, 1.
Hazard of the Die, The, 2.
Heart of Midlothian, The, 1.
Heir at Law, The, 1.
Hide and Seek Lovers, 1.
Honest Thieves, 2.
Hunchback, The, 1
Husband at Sight, A, 2.
Is She a Woman? 2.
Jack Cade, 2.
John Jones, 2.
Jonathan Bradford, 5.
Kentuckian, The, 2.
King and the Freebooters, The, 1.
King Henry IV, Part 1, 2.
King Lear, 2.
King Richard III, 2.
Ladies' Man, The, 2.
Lady and a Gentleman, A, etc., 2.
Lady of Lyons, The, 1.
Laugh When You Can, 1.
Liar, The, 1.
Loan of a Lover, The, 1.
Love Chase, The, 1.
Lover by Proxy, A, 2.
Love's Sacrifice, 5.
Lucille, 2.
Lucretia Borgia, 3.
Macbeth, 1.
Man and Wife, 1
Man of the World, The, 1.
Marco Bombs, 3.
Mary Tudor, 7.
Masaniello, 1.
Merchant of Venice, The, 1.
Merry Wives of Windsor, The, 2.
Metamora, 2.
Middy Ashore, The, 3.
Militia Training, 1.
Miller and his Men, The, 5.
Minerali, The, 3.
Money, 3.
Monsieur Mallet, 2.
Mr. and Mrs. Peter White, 4.
Much Ado About Nothing, 1.
My Aunt, 1.
My Sister Kate, 2.
My Wife's Dentist, 3.
Nabob for an Hour, A, 2.
Naval Engagements, 5
New Footman, The, 3.
Nicholas Nickleby, 1.
Of Age To-morrow, 1.
One Hour, 3.
Othello, 1.
Othello Travestie, 1
Paul Jones, 1.
Perfection, 1
Pizarro, 2.
Prettyjohn & Co., 2.
Rent Day, The, 1.
Richelieu, 2.
Rip Van Winkle, 1
Rob Roy, 1.
Roland for an Oliver, A, 3.
Scan Mag, 1.
Secret, The, 2.
Secret Service, 2.
She Stoops to Conquer, 1.
Speed the Plough, 1.
Spoiled Child, The, 1.
Sprigs of Laurel, 1.
Stranger, The, 1.
Student of Gottengen, The, 1.
Sudden Thoughts, 2.
Sweethearts and Wives, 2.
Therese, 1.
Tom and Jerry, 1.
Tommy Tompkins, 3.
Tour de Nesle, La, 1.
Town and Country, 1.
Turning the Tables, 3.
'Twas I, 3.
Two Drovers, The, 1.
Two Gregories, The, 2.
Uncle John, 2.
Valet de Sham, The, 2.
Village Doctor, The, 2.
Virginius, 1.
Wedding Breakfast, The, 2.
Wedding Day, The, 1.
Welsh Girl, The, 1.
Werner, 1.
West End, The, 1.
Wild Oats, 1.
William Tell, 1.
Wraith of the Lake, The, 3.
You Can't Marry Your Grandmother, 3.
Youthful Queen, The, 1.

INCOME

1844

Spring and Fall Seasons
(Ludlow and Smith Return Book)

1844	April	9	$656.50	*Hamlet & The Artful Dodger* Macready & J. M. Field
	"	10	311.50	*Richelieu & The Day After the Wedding* Macready & Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	11	253 00	*Virginius & A Lover By Proxy* Macready & Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	12	183.25	*John Jones & The Artful Dodger* Mr & Mrs. J M. Field (Benefit)
	"	13	386.00	*Werner & A Ghost In Spite of Himself* Macready & Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	15	361.50	*Othello & The Dumb Belle* Macready & Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	16	122 00	*The Merchant of Venice & My Aunt* Macready & Mr. & Mrs Field
	"	17	587.50	*Macbeth & The Day After the Wedding* Macready (Benefit) & Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	18	77.50	*The Heir at Law & Mr. & Mrs. White* Mrs. W. H Smith & T. Placide
	"	19	Faded	*Money & Turning the Tables* Mrs. W. H. Smith & T. Placide
	"	20	104 00	*The Englishman in India & Fortune's Frolic & Middy Ashore* Mrs. W. H. Smith & T. Placide
	"	22	Faded	*The Love Chase & A Roland For An Oliver* Mrs. W. H. Smith & T. Placide
	"	23	44.75	*Man and Wife & Boots at the Swan* Mrs. W. H. Smith & T. Placide
	"	24	144.39(?)	*Guy Mannering & The Welsh Girl* Mrs. W. H. Smith (Benefit) & T. Placide
	"	25	98 50	*Love's Sacrifice & A Roland For An Oliver* Mrs. W. H. Smith & T. Placide
	"	26	164.25	*Is She a Woman? & The Golden Farmer & The New Footman* Mrs. W. H. Smith & T. Placide (Benefit)
	"	27	174.25	*Mr. & Mrs White & The Aethiop*
	"	29	121.00	*Love's Sacrifice & The New Footman*
	"	30	88.75	*The Attic Story & The Aethiop*
	May	1	68.50	*Fortune's Frolic & The Golden Farmer & Turning the Tables*
	"	2	72.25	*La Tour de Nesle & The Attic Story*
	"	3	79.00	*Love's Sacrifice & Tommy Tompkins*
	"	4	118.00	*The Murderer & The Faithful Irishman*
	"	6	73.75	*Money & Prettyjohn & Co.*
	"	7	75 50	*Sweethearts and Wives & The Murderer*
	"	8	33.00	*The Rent Day & Prettyjohn & Co.*
	"	9	69.50	*The Englishman in India & The Murderer*

1844	May	10	72.75	*Lucille & The Artful Dodger* Mr. & Mrs. J M. Field
	"	11	47.25	*Two Drovers & The Children in the Wood & The Critic* Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	13	61 50	*Gabrielle & Boots at the Swan* Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	14	254 50	*Town and Country & Nicholas Nickleby* Mr. & Mrs. Field
	"	15	76.50	*Much Ado About Nothing*, Songs, etc. Mr. & Mrs. Field & Columbia Minstrels
	"	16	90.50	*The Heart of Midlothian—Songs—Die Beichte* Mr. & Mrs. Field, Columbia Minstrels, Germans
	"	17	105 25	*Wild Oats & A Lover by Proxy* Mr. & Mrs. Field (Benefit)
	"	18	60.00	*The Golden Farmer, & The Two Gregories* Song Columbia Minstrels
	"	20	253.25	*King Henry IV & 'Twas I* J. H. Hackett
	"	21	152.25	*My Sister Kate, Rip Van Winkle, Tommy Tompkins* J H. Hackett
	"	22	324 25	*The Merry Wives of Windsor & 'Twas I* J. H. Hackett
	"	23	365.75	*The Man of the World & Mons. Mallet* J. H. Hackett (Benefit)
	"	24	173 25	*King Henry IV & The Two Gregories* J. H. Hackett
	"	25	124.50	*The Kentuckian, Mons. Mallet, Militia Training* J. H. Hackett
	"	27	115.50	*King Lear & The Dead Shot* J. H. Hackett
	"	28	178.25	*The Merry Wives of Windsor & The Kentuckian* J. H. Hackett (Benefit)
	"	29	97.50	*The Husband at Sight & The Gambler's Fate*
	"	31	63.00	*The Gambler's Fate & The Husband at Sight*
	June	1	187.25	*One Hour & The Miller & his Men*
	"	3	282.00	*The Green Eyed Monster & The Miller & his Men*
	"	4	156.50	*The Miller & his Men & The Golden Farmer*
	"	5	105.50	*My Sister Kate* & Feats of Natural Magic Herr Alexander
	"	6	65.50	Natural Magic & *Mr. & Mrs. White* Herr Alexander
	"	7	80.00	The Conquering Game—Natural Magic—*A Roland for An Olwer* Herr Alexander
	"	8	75.25	*Alive and Merry*, Natural Magic, Dances, *The Secret* Herr Alexander (Benefit), Bennie, Oceana

1844	June	10		255.00	*Richelieu* Edwin Forrest
	"	11		456 25	*Metamora & Turning the Tables* Edwin Forrest
	"	12		347.50	*Othello & The Secret* Edwin Forrest
	"	13		519.50	*The Gladiator & Tommy Tompkins* Edwin Forrest
	"	14		341.25	*King Richard III & The Dead Shot* Edwin Forrest
	"	15		234.50	*Metamora & Fortune's Frolic* Edwin Forrest
	"	17		405 50	*Jack Cade & One Hour* Edwin Forrest
	"	18		227.25	*The Gladiator & 'Twas I* Edwin Forrest
	"	19		278.75	*Jack Cade & Valet de Sham* Edwin Forrest
	"	20		377.00	*King Lear & Mr. and Mrs. White* Edwin Forrest (Benefit)
	"	21		63.50	*Father & Daughter & The Miller & his Men* (Benefit of New Orleans Flood Sufferers)
	"	22		32.75	*The Golden Farmer & The Miller & his Men*
	"	24		181.00	*The Youthful Queen & Grandfather Whitehead* Henry Placide
	"	25		65.75	*Secret Service & Uncle John* Henry Placide
	"	26		163.75	*Grandfather Whitehead & A Nabob for an Hour* Henry Placide
	"	27		51.00	*Secret Service & The Double Bedded Room* Henry Placide
	"	28		60.25	*Grandfather Whitehead & Uncle John* Henry Placide
	"	29		45.25	*The Village Doctor & Scan Mag* Henry Placide
	July	1		157.00	*The West End & A Nabob for an Hour* Henry Placide (Benefit)
	"	2		26.75	*Jonathan Bradford & The Green Eyed Monster*
	"	3		163.75	*Love's Sacrifice & The Valet de Sham*
	"	4	a.m.	66.40	*The Children in the Wood & The Forest of Rosenwald.*
	"	4	p.m.	198 50	*The Declaration of Independence—Hide and Seek Lovers—The Feast of Lanterns* Flood Victims—All volunteered
	"	6		67.50	*The Lady of Lyons & Of Age To-morrow*
	August		26	117.00	*She Stoops to Conquer & The Green Eyed Monster*
	"		27	110.50	*Speed the Plough & One Hour*
	"		28	87.75	*The Stranger & Perfection*
	"		29	72.25	*The Liar & The Seven Clerks*
	"		30	81.75	*Asmodeus & The Secret*
	"		31	80.75	*Asmodeus & The Denouncer*

1844	September	2	105.00	*Ellen Wareham* & Scotch Strathspey & *Amodeus* W. G. Wells
	"	3	110.00	*Guy Mannering* & Hornpipe & *Sudden Thoughts* W. G. Wells
	"	4	131.50	*Money* & *L'Amour dans L'Embarrass* (ballet) Bennie, Wells, etc.
	"	5	117.50	*Ellen Wareham, L'Amour dans L'Embarrass, A Lady and Gentleman* Wells and Bennie
	"	6	84.50	*Sweethearts and Wives,* Spanish Bolero, *Bears Not Beasts* Wells and Bennie
	"	7	277.25	*The Flying Dutchman* & *L'Amour dans L'Embarrass* Wells & Bennie
	"	9	184.50	*The Flying Dutchman,* Dancing, *Laugh When You Can* Wells and Bennie
	"	10	109.50	*The Murderer—The Duel* (ballet) Wells and Bennie
	"	11	105 75	*The Flying Dutchman* & *The Duel* Wells & Bennie
	"	12	89.50	*The Flying Dutchman,* Dancing, *Tommy Tompkins* Wells & Bennie
	"	13	82.75	*The Flying Dutchman* & *Marco Bomba*
	"	14	152.75	*The Minerali, Marco Bomba, The Middy Ashore*
	"	16	73 25	*The Minerals, Jemmie of Aberdeen* (ballet), *Chaos is Come Again*
	"	17	60.50	*The Wedding Day, The Death Token, Marco Bomba*
	"	18	56.75	*The Forest of Rosenwald, Jemmie of Aberdeen, My Wife's Dentist*
	"	19	53.75	*The Doge of Genoa* & *Vol au Vent!* (ballet)
	"	20	42.50	*The Death Token, Naval Engagements, Vol au Vent!*
	"	21	94.50	*Chaos is Come Again, The Wraith of the Lake, Vol au Vent*
	"	23	83.00	*The Wraith of the Lake, Naval Engagements*
	"	24	55.50	*The Doge of Genoa* & *The Wraith of the Lake*
	"	25	71.25	*Naval Engagements, The Midnight Assault* (tableau), *The Spoiled Child*
	"	26	54.75	*The Hazard of the Die* & *The Middy Ashore*
	"	27	43.75	*The Hazard of the Die* & *The Minerals*
	"	28	95.50	*The Broken Sword, Raphael's Dream* (ballet) *Don Juan* (pantomime)
	"	30	80.00	*The Student of Gottengen, My Wife's Dentist, The Duel*

1844	October	1	67.50	*The King and the Freebooters & Little Devil*
	"	2	61.25	*The Dumb Belle, The Evil Eye, Naval Engagements*
	"	3	83.00	*Damon and Pythias & Don Juan*
	"	4	102.25	*Tortesa the Usurer & Chaos is Come Again*
	"	5	116.25	*The King and the Freebooters & Ali Pacha*
	"	7	110.00	*King Richard III & You Can't Marry Your Grandmother*
	"	8	55.75	*Therese & Ali Pacha*
	"	9	149.00	*Mary Tudor & The Wedding Breakfast*
	"	10	56.75	*Pizarro & You Can't Marry Your Grandmother*
	"	11	146 25	*Mary Tudor & The Wedding Breakfast*
	"	12	141.00	*Rob Roy & William Tell*
	"	14	255.00	*Mary Tudor & My Wife's Dentist*
	"	15	124 50	*Mary Tudor & You Can't Marry Your Grandmother*
	"	16	103.50	*The School for Scandal* (Screen Scene), *Wedding Breakfast, Tom and Jerry*
	"	17	96.00	*The Hunchback & The Handsome Husband*
	"	18	65.00	*Mary Tudor & Sudden Thoughts*
	"	19	224.00	*A Lady and a Gentleman, The Bride of Abydos*
	"	21	172.50	*The Liar & The Bride of Abydos*
	"	22	157.25	*The Bride of Abydos & Life in China*
	"	23	102 75	*The Bride of Abydos & Honest Thieves*
	"	24	87.75	*The Flying Dutchman & Sprigs of Laurel*
	"	25	76 75	*The Aethiop & Fortune's Frolic*
	"	26	94.75	*Lucretia Borgia & The Ladies' Man*
	"	28	384 50	*Mary Tudor & Manzanello*
	"	29	75.00	*Lucretia Borgia & The Bride of Abydos*
	"	30	252.00	*Love's Sacrifice & Othello Travestie*
	"	31	91.75	*Lucretia Borgia, John Jones of the War Office, The Bride of Abydos* (last act)
	November	1	95.75	*Guy Mannering & The Loan of a Lover*
	"	2	300 00	*The Ladies' Man, Paul Jones, The New Footman* (Ludlow's Benefit)

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